

In order to truly give, it is necessary to feel connected to the receiver. A link to another creates the desire to make the other happy. This is most commonly observed when a mother caringly gives to her offspring.

The way to “learn” this trait – the way to connect with others and empathize with them – is to strengthen our links to the Creator. Relating to Him, we feel small and insignificant in the big picture of time and space. We begin to feel dependence upon Him and a connection to others in the same situation – the human condition.

We are all traveling on the same boat. Your need for the Captain is the same as that of others. Although your function as a part of the crew may be a little more important than that of someone else, everyone is needed on the boat in order to serve the Captain and reach the destination safely.

Learn to treat them accordingly. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

The Gift of Convenience

“We should thank Hashem for giving us sidewalks. It is hard to imagine, but there was a time when there were no sidewalks. To keep people from having to walk in the mud, sand was put alongside the houses and this was considered a very good benefit for mankind to walk more easily. But then sidewalks came into existence, a tremendous benefit for which we should thank Hashem.”

In the past 100 years, Hashem has made life much more convenient for us to be able to invest time into learning Torah and connecting to Hashem with prayer. (Norman D. Levy; Based on Rabbi Miller’s, Duties of the Mind)

Lein Change

In the Agudat Yisrael shul of Baltimore, there are two readers of the Torah, Rabbi Moshe Juravel and Mr. Izzy Strauss. Both are outstanding at their craft; their enunciation is clear, they are grammatically precise, and they are always thoroughly prepared. Rabbi Juravel and Mr. Strauss read on alternate weeks.

One Friday night Rabbi Juravel developed a severe sore throat. He was sure that he would not be able to read the Torah loudly enough the next morning, and that he might even damage his vocal chords by straining his voice. He tried drinking tea with honey, but nothing helped. All he could do was hope that by the next morning his voice would improve. It didn’t.

When he came to shul Shabbat morning, Mr. Strauss was already there. “Izzy,” said Rabbi Juravel hoarsely, “do you think you could pinch-hit for me today? My voice is not up to it.”

“Why of course,” replied Izzy. “I’ll begin looking it over right now. And I hope you have a *refuah shelemah*.”

After *shaharit* Rabbi Juravel went to the *bimah* and began reading the *perashah*. He struggled to make his voice heard and had to stop numerous times to clear his throat. After the first *aliyah*, he sat down and let Mr. Strauss take over.

After prayers, as everyone was leaving shul, the *gabbai* asked Rabbi Juravel, “Why did you even begin reading? You knew you wouldn’t be able to do it.”

Rabbi Juravel cleared his throat and replied, “Most people in the shul don’t know whose turn it is to read any particular week. Had Izzy begun reading from the beginning of the *perashah* and made any mistakes, people would think he hadn’t prepared properly. This way, by my reading the first *aliyah*, everyone realized that it was really my turn to read - except because of my voice I could not go on. So if Izzy made any mistakes when he took over, people would understand that it was because he was asked to read at the last minute!” (Echoes of the Maggid)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition
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SHABBAT RE'EH ☆ װoot♣ρ , □X♥↑

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 49:14-51:3

AUGUST 10-11, 2018 30 AB 5778

Friday Shir Hashirim/ Minhah: 6:35, 7:30	Shaharit: 5:04, 6:40, 8:10, 9:00, 9:10
Candlelighting: 7:42 pm	Morning Shema by: 8:39 am
Evening Shema after: 8:40 pm	Shabbat Classes: 6:20 pm
	Shabbat Minhah: 7:20 pm
	Shabbat Ends: 8:39 pm (R"Y 9:11 pm)

These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Sunday Minhah: **7:00 pm**

Rosh Hodesh Elul will be celebrated on Shabbat & Sunday, August 11 & 12.
Mabrook to Joey & Sophia Mizrahi on the engagement of their daughter, Karen, to Morris Sutton.

A Message from our Rabbi

"כִּי־יְהִי־בְךָ אֲבִיּוֹן מֵאַחַד אַחֶיךָ בְּאַרְצְךָ שְׁעָרֶיךָ בְּאַרְצְךָ"

"If there shall be a destitute person among you...in any of your cities, in your land." (*Debarim 15:7*)

After a long day spent going house to house to collect charity, a beggar knocks on the door of a stately mansion. Without thinking twice, he opens the unlocked outside door and trudges in, his bare, mud-caked feet leaving clouds of dirt all over the marble floor. The incensed owner orders his servants to throw the intruder out at once, but the poor man pleads for the opportunity to say a few words.

"Each day in *Baruch She'amar* we praise Hashem saying, 'Blessed is He Who has mercy on earth, blessed is He Who has mercy on creatures.' We are taught to emulate the ways of Hashem." The beggar continued, "Hashem is merciful so you, too, be merciful. You are clearly emulating Hashem in having mercy on the condition of your 'earth' (the floor of your home). Now also remember the next words in the prayers, and have mercy on the creatures. Can you please give some *sedakah*?"

To his credit, the wealthy homeowner accepted the rebuke and gave the impoverished visitor a respectable sum of money.

With this tale, the *Ben Ish Hai* seeks to explain a *pasuk* in our *parashah*, "If there is among you a needy person...in your land, etc." The *misvah* of *sedakah* applies equally in and outside of Israel. Why mention the Land?

It comes to teach us a very pertinent lesson, which is as applicable today as it was when the *Ben Ish Hai* first stated it over a century ago.

Inordinate amounts of time and resources are spent to purchase and beautify living quarters. Architectural plans, huge sums to build, hours spent to choose colors, designs, wood floors, furniture options, and of course, the precise layout of the kitchen cabinets and countertop choices. The local locksmith is busy putting on two or even three locks on outside doors. State of the art alarm and surveillance systems installed to discourage intruders. If we are willing to show so much “mercy on earth,” to expend so much money and effort on a piece of earth and a house, how much more should we be willing to spend on showing mercy toward one of our brethren. Therefore, the *pasuk* says to draw the right lessons from “your land” and “your cities” and don’t “harden your heart or close your hand from your needy brethren!”

This isn’t always an easy task. If one is running late when he comes to shul and a *sedakah* collector comes by, or a housewife is busy the last few minutes before Shabbat and the man at the door sings out, “*Hachnasat Kallah*.” Why now of all times? The *Zohar* says that there are times when there is a decree against a person, and Hashem, in His kindness, brings a poor person his way, so that the merit of *sedaka* will save him. Then the collector may very well be his rescuer. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Going With the Flow

The *perashah* begins, “See I have placed before you today the blessing and curse.” This is said in the singular form, rather than plural, and the *Ba’al HaTurim* explains that this statement, “see,” was made to each and every individual. Each of us has the blessing and curse lying in front of us, the ability to choose between right and wrong.

This does not mean, however, that the correct choice is always obvious. The same *perashah* also discusses the possibility of a false prophet, coming to guide us to idolatry, even proving to us that his false god has real power:

Throughout our lives, we are confronted with opportunities to choose the good - yet the good may not be immediately obvious. Sociologists talk about the “bandwagon effect,” in which even truly bad ideas are adopted at an increasing rate the more they are adopted by others.

How often are we fooled, in our own lives, by things which appear moral or correct to others? Are we “going with the flow,” or are we looking at and evaluating the blessing and the curse?

This is the challenge of our *perashah*, and it lies before each and every one of us.
(Rabbi Yaakov Menken)

The Story is Not Over

There once was a poor villager who lived in a small Shtetl in prewar Europe. His sole income was through his prized possession; his two strong horses. One morning our friend came out to his stable to discover the door open and the horses gone. All his friends came to console him, “This is so terrible” they said. He replied, “The story is not yet over. Give it some time.”

The next morning his horses returned together with their newfound friend; a wild horse that they met in the fields. Hearing of this occurrence, all of the friends came and said, “How wonderful this is”. Again the villager replied, “The story is not yet over”.

The next morning the poor villager’s son was attempting to tame the wild horse. The stallion did not take kindly to this treatment and protested in his own subtle way; the boy found himself kicked to the ground with two broken legs. Once again all the

friends came to express their sorrow. The villager merely replied, “You will see, the story is not yet over.”

One week later, soldiers from the Czar’s army came to town and went from door to door recruiting all able-bodied young men. Seeing the villager’s son in his handicapped state, they chose to leave him be. Hearing about this, all the friends came to share in the villager’s relief and joy. Finally the villager said, “My friends, now the story is over.”

If one’s relative passes away, one is prohibited to express their sorrow by cutting themselves or by giving themselves a bald spot. This prohibition is prefaced with the statement “You are children to Hashem your G-d.” What is the Torah teaching us with this introduction?

The Ibn Ezra explains, “Once you realize that Hashem is our father, and He loves us more than a father loves his child, it is inappropriate to overly mourn His action, for obviously everything He does to us is for our ultimate good. Although we may not understand His reasons, we must rely on Him like a small child relies on his father despite his lack of understanding of his father’s actions.”

Our comprehension is very limited. We can only see the current state; we do not see the past or the future. We look at one fragment of Hashem’s script and view it as bad. We have to realize that the story is not yet over; we will yet see how it is for our ultimate good.

The *Ramban* once made an interesting deal with his friend. They were having trouble understanding Hashem’s ways, thus they agreed that whoever would die first would come to his friend in a dream and relate the proceedings of the upper-worlds.

Sure enough the *Ramban*’s friend passed away first. The *Ramban* eagerly awaited the coming revelation. Finally his friend appeared to him and said, “I am not permitted to reveal the proceedings of the upper worlds. All I can tell you is that up here, that which we imagine to be *Elokim*- strict judgment- in the *heichal* of Hashem is understood to be *Hesed*.”

There is an expression, “Hashem closes windows of opportunity and He opens up a door.” At times, that which appears to be the worst possible scenario is really the best thing for us.

The *pasuk* says , *כי גבר עלינו חסדו* this is literally translated as ‘For his kindness has overpowered us’. What does this mean that Hashem’s kindness overpowers us? *Mefarshim* explain, at times we labor to receive something which we think is good for us. Hashem however, knows that we would be better off without it. Thus his *Hesed* overpowers us and doesn’t give us what we desire.

When we go through a tough situation it is challenging to see the good. We must realize that we are Hashem’s children and thus he only has the best in mind for us. We must tell ourselves, ‘The story is not yet over’. In the World-to-Come, in hindsight we will understand how everything was really for our good. At that time we will be able to say, ‘The story is now over’. (*Tiferes Yosef*)

Paper Cuts

Someone once quipped that we are more concerned about a paper cut on our lips than we are about a murder in Yerushalayim. This, he added, does not make us wicked, it is simply an expression of human nature.

Psychiatrists say that much of what appears to be kindness is actually taking rather than giving. People may help in order to impress others, or perhaps to relieve a guilty conscience, or simply because they feel uncomfortable when viewing suffering – and so they remove it. It may appear as if people are giving to others, when they are actually helping themselves.