



# דרכים בפרשה

בהר



**וכי ימוך אחיך ומטה ידו עמך והחזקת בו (כה:לה)**

***If your brother becomes impoverished and his means falter in your proximity, you shall strengthen him (25:35)***

There are two beautiful ideas that I would like to share on this regarding how one must approach the concept of tzeddaka.

The Chofetz Chaim zt"l would say over the following story: There were two business partners, Reuven and Shimon, that had an arrangement in which each partner would take whatever their family's needs were. After that, all profits would be split equally. This went on for some time until the wheel of fortune began to turn drastically. Without a choice, the two partners agreed to fully cut back on their own household expenses. For now, they would each only take exactly what was needed for food. While Reuven was faithful to his commitment, hardly spending anything on his family, Shimon was taking advantage and actually spending more than previously. With time, the business went bankrupt and all they were left with was the shirts on their backs. Reuven began looking through the papers and realized that Shimon had been cheating him and stealing from the partnership. While Reuven and family had nothing to eat, Shimon spared no expense. Reuven of course began to scream and cry about how he was treated and the terrible misdeeds that were done. After all, this was a partnership which was not honoured. With no choice, Reuven was now forced to collect from door.

Zugt der Heiliger Chofetz Chaim, the Torah tells us **וכי ימוך אחיך ומטה ידו עמך** - *if your brother becomes poor and his means falter with you*. The Torah is teaching us that there is a partnership between the wealthy person and the mitzvah of tzeddaka: HaShem gives a person whatever he needs. This includes enough for himself and enough for his partners, i.e. the tzeddaka causes. If a person sees

that *chv"sh* things are getting difficult and the money is no longer free flowing, there is no other choice but to cut down on the daily expenditures. At the same time, it is perfectly acceptable that the tzeddakos will be cut back as well until HaShem returns the *shefa*. After all, this is how a partnership works. However, the Chofetz Chaim pointed out that this seems not to be the case by most people. The first thing that goes is usually the tzeddaka pledges, because after all, times are difficult. But the standards of living don't usually change and at times they even increase (perhaps to keep up the perception and put on a show for everyone else). But what happened to the partnership? Now the partner is forced to go from door to door because times are tough. The poor people lose out, the worthy holy causes lose out and of course the Torah causes lose out.

The Chofetz Chaim cautions that the other partner will cry out bitterly as well because he is being cheated out of his fair share! We must view the tzeddakos as worthy partners and not as "*nebach* cases" that we are being kind to... when we feel like it.

***In 2014, a Gallup Poll*** was conducted to determine the amount of hours that the average salaried employee works. Suffice it to say that the days of 9-5 on average no longer exist. What was once a standard 40 hour work week in many cases has become well over 60 hours. If one is self-employed, very often the days become nights and the nights become days.

The Torah obligates each and every one of us on our own level to make *tzedakah* one of the focuses of our lives. We must be charitable, constantly thinking of others, seeing how we can help strengthen them. But thinking of all the hard work and efforts that we put in to earn the money needed to meet our ever growing list of obligations, can at times cause this mitzvah to seem exceedingly difficult.

By referring to all *Yidden* as brothers, the Torah is teaching us how we must view each other, thus giving us the strength to make this mitzvah a priority. If one's very own brother would approach with a request for desperately needed support, we would surely do all that we could, and even go above and beyond to see to it that they receive whatever is needed. The mitzvah of *tzedakah* gives us the opportunity to give ourselves a reality check every once in a while and reflect upon how we treat another *Yid*. Is he like family to us, or is that sensitivity also gone?

R' Avrohom Hakohen Karlisker *zt"l* (d.1810-Chessed L'Avrohom) offers the following *mashal* on this *passuk* to help put things into perspective:

There were two wealthy people that set out for a long journey together to a location that would require them to have a lot of money. The first person took most of his funds to the post office and sent it ahead of time to be there for him upon his arrival. The second one took one look at the cost of postage and decided that he would take the money with him on his journey. Along their journey, they were attacked by robbers. They searched the first person and found a few coins that he brought with him for the way, but nothing more. The second person however was a different story. They unloaded him of everything that he had and beat him up in the hopes that perhaps he had even more money hidden that they would find.

Rav Avrohom explained that *Hakodosh Baruch Hu* gives everyone whatever they need for their journey

in this world. The final destination, of course, is *Olam Haba*. Throughout our travels, the *Yetzer Hara* throws all types of stumbling blocks in an attempt to rob us of whatever we have. His goal is that we arrive at our final destination empty-handed.

If we want to hit the road with our eyes wide open, we must come up with a strategy to ensure that our valuables arrive in full. That strategy, of course, is making long term investments; placing our hard earned money in wise places where the payout will not just be right here and right now, but rather, *nitzchiyus- for eternity!* We may look at our bank accounts and see that money is missing, but when we get to *Olam Haba*, we will see every last penny there, with interest galore.

The second person of course, takes a different path. He holds onto what he has down here, unwilling to "waste" it on *mitzvah* opportunities, because after all, "It's mine and I worked hard for it". Maybe he gives a quarter here and a dollar there, but nothing more. Throughout his lifetime, many different expenses will come up, constantly forcing him to spend money. Even if he manages to amass a few extra dollars or even a small fortune in business, coming out ahead, let's be honest here; what will happen to that money? In the history of the world, there has never once been someone who was able to make their final journey along with their money. None of it will come with him, unless of course he sends it ahead of him! True he may die a wealthy man, but upon his arrival upstairs he will only have those few quarters and dollars that he gave every now and then.

The postage rates, a.k.a. mitzvos may be expensive, but in the end, that is the one and only way that our hard earned money will be there for us when we really need it.

Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפּעל



ALL PARSHA  
A PRODUCT OF THE  
**DOWNLOAD ALL PARSHA!**  
the new free parsha app

Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play