

**שבת קודש פרשת ויחי | מסכת כתובות דף ס"ח**

**INSIGHTS FROM OUR CHABUROS**

**Deception and its consequences**

המקבל צדקה ואין צריך לכך סופו אינו נפטר מן העולם עד שיבא לידי כך

**T**he Baraisa declares a serious verdict against one who collects tzedakah fraudulently. In particular, if someone portrays himself as an invalid, he will become incapacitated as retribution for his charade. The הפלאה points out that the Gemara taught earlier (67b) that if a person has money of his own, but he decides to take money from communal funds rather than spending his own resources, we give him money as a loan, and the funds are to be paid back after he dies (if not before). The question is that our Gemara states that by falsely portraying himself as a pauper, he will become destitute before he dies. This being the case, how can we expect to collect money from this person's estate after he dies if we are told that he will become penniless before he dies due to his deception? It would be difficult to say that the collection after he dies refers to selling his assets or his house, because there is no obligation to sell one's house if the person has become destitute.

The הפלאה answers that when our Gemara states that a person will become stricken before he dies, it only refers to a case where the person collected tzedakah through falsely portraying himself as a needy or injured person when he really is not in need. The earlier Gemara is speaking about a normal person who presents himself as he genuinely is, but he asks for tzedakah because he chooses not to spend his own money. This person does not want tzedakah per se, but he is rather asking for a free handout. Here, we give him the money, and we ask that he reimburse the community chest. In this case, the person is not trying to mislead anyone, and he is not subject to the curse of facing poverty before he dies.

Alternatively, הפלאה explains that when our Gemara says that the person will not leave this world until he experiences the condition he feigned, it does not necessarily mean that he will die penniless. He might die as a wealthy man, and there will be assets from which to collect. However, this unfortunate soul will have to return to earth to correct for his misdeed, and in his next sojourn on earth he will be destitute. Even after he dies this time, he will not be dismissed from revisiting this world in another setting, but this time he will have to correct for his misrepresenting himself.

**PARSHA CONNECTION**

**In this week's daf** the משנה says that if a father married off one daughter with a certain dowry then we should do the same for the next daughter. This concept of treating two children alike is also found in פרשת ויחי. Although יעקב switched his hands and put his right hand on the head of אפרים he gave both of them the same ברכה. The possuk (טו) ויברך את־יוסף ויאמר האלהים אשר התהלכו אבותי לפניו אברהם ויצחק (פרק מח פסוק זה) ויוסף יעקב blessed יעקב. האלהים הרעה אותי מעודי עד־היום הזה. The possuk says that יוסף addressed ברכה to יוסף. The possuk addresses יוסף and says את אפרים ויברך את יוסף. What does it mean when it says ויברך את יוסף? Why didn't יעקב bless them directly? The מפרשים explain (רמב"ן, רבינו בחיי) that good children are a blessing to their parents. The תורה is telling us that by blessing his children, יעקב was giving יוסף the ultimate ברכה. The הקדוש explains that יעקב could not give them a ברכה directly because they were not ראוי, like we see earlier when יעקב asked יוסף who are they, and רש"י writes means who are they that they are worthy of a ברכה. Therefore יעקב gave their ברכה to their father יוסף and thereby blessed them through יוסף. May all have much נחת from our children אי"ה.

**STORIES OF THE DAF**

**Dishonest Collectors**

"באו ונחזיק תורה לרמאים..."

**O**n today's daf we are told that we really ought to appreciate false solicitors of charity. Were it not for them, we would be held accountable for turning away any person in serious need. Since there are some rogues who do prey on the wellintentioned, we are no longer duty-bound to assume that everyone we meet who asks for our assistance is actually in desperate need. The Rif, zt"l, on Ein Yaakov explains we express our appreciation to the phonies...by giving them charity!

The Satmar Rav, zt"l, gave a great deal of tzedakah. It was well known that if one really needed money, the Rav could be convinced to pay out huge sums. Once, a man came before him and told him a heartbreaking tale about how his wife was sick and his children were also ill in different, horrific ways.

The Rav was exceedingly moved. On the table was a small bag that held a huge sum that one of his wealthy Chasidim had left as a "pidyon nefesh," together with a kvitl. The Rav, clearly in distress from hearing the man's tale of woe, immediately thrust the bag of money into the poor man's hand. The man tearfully thanked the Rav and raced from the room, presumably to rush home and tell his family that their money problems at least were over.

A few minutes after the man had left, the Rav's gabbai ran in, obviously flustered, and exclaimed, "Where is the man who was dressed in such-and-such a way?" He was obviously referring to the man with the sob story.

The Satmar Rav replied, "He just left." "But Rebbe, we must find him! He is a faker, a phony! How will we get the money back from him? Did the Rebbe give him a large sum of money?" Although the gabbai was frantic, the Rebbe suddenly seemed to relax again.

## HALACHA HIGHLIGHT

Tzedaka for a person who won't work

המקבל צדקה ואין צריך לו

*One who accepts tzedaka but does not need it*

**S**hulchan Aruch<sup>1</sup> rules that a wealthy person who starves himself and due to his stinginess won't buy food for himself is not permitted to take tzedaka. Maharashdam adds that it is obvious that there is no distinction between one who has the money to purchase food and refuses to use it and a person who does not have money to purchase food but can get a job that would give him the means to support himself. Neither one of these people is allowed to collect tzedaka and the logic for this is obvious. Allowing a person to collect tzedaka even though he has the ability to get a job without any expectation that he would make an effort to get a job creates an impossible burden for the community. There would be no incentive for poor people to work since they could expect the wealthy people to provide them with their needs. In a short amount of time the community would be faced with the circumstance that the need for tzedaka would far outweigh the available funds. Accordingly, Teshuvos Shevet Hakehasi writes that it is prohibited for a pauper, who has the means to get a job, to take tzedaka funds. Some note, however, that if the pauper has a wife and children he should be given money for their sake since there is no reason they should suffer because their husband or father won't get a job.

Rav Moshe Feinstein notes that Rema discusses the parameters of the Yissocher-Zevulun agreement in the halachos of Torah study rather than in the section of tzedaka. The reason for this placement, explains Rav Moshe, is that it is not a tzedaka agreement because it can be arranged even with a person who has the means to get a job and earn his own living. Furthermore, there is no mitzvah of tzedaka for a person who has property that he could use to support himself until he dips below the poverty level because there is no right to collect tzedaka for learning unless one is truly poor.

1. שר"ע יו"ד סי' רנ"ג סי' ל.

## MUSSAR FROM THE DAF

Giving Tzedakah

ותני רבי חייא בר רב מדיפתי, רבי יהושע בן קרחה אומר: כל המעלים עיניו מן הצדקה — כאילו עובד עבודה זרה

**T**he Gemara tells us that anyone who hides his eyes from tzedakah, he is viewed as if he is an idol worshiper. What is the connection between not giving tzedakah and idol worship? One can also ask why does the Gemara specifically state one who "hides his eyes from tzedakah," why not simply state that one who doesn't give tzedakah is compared to one who worships Avodah Zarah?

To understand our Gemara, we first have to understand why a person would worship Avodah Zarah? In Sanhedrin 63 רב יהודה אמר רב tells us ישראל בעבודת כוכבים יודעין הוה ישראל ולא עבדו עבודת כוכבים אלא להתיר להם עריות בפרהסיא שאין בה ממש ולא עבדו עבודת כוכבים אלא להתיר להם עריות בפרהסיא.

In reality, the Yidden that worshiped Avodah Zarah didn't really believe that it had any power, rather they engaged in the Avodah Zarah to permit illicit relations. In other words, these people want to engage in relations that they now are prohibited by Hashem. In order to do so they make it as if Hashem C"V is not the true God and therefore they are free to ignore his commandments. We see from this Gemara that a person doesn't want to feel as if they are living a life of contradictions, so they will convince themselves of a reality so that they don't feel bad about themselves. However, if they were to truly spend time contemplating about the matter honestly, they would eventually discover the truth and how they lied to themselves.

The same is true with one who hides their eyes from tzedakah. Chazal specifically states that they hide their eyes as opposed to not giving, as the person deep down doesn't want to give tzedakah. He doesn't want to admit that he saw a need for tzedakah because then he would have to live the inner contradiction and guilt that would come with denying others tzedakah. He just convinces himself that he doesn't see any good tzedakah opportunities in front of him so therefore he is exempt from giving tzedakah. When a person or organization asks for tzedakah, there is sometimes a voice that tells us that they are not worthy, not because we looked into the organization or person, but rather because deep down we don't want to feel bad if we don't give to them. If one would spend time thinking about their needs and mission, then one (who has the means) would surely give to the tzedakah need in front of them.

## POINT TO PONDER

**The Gemara says** אמרו לו לרבי לדברך מי שיש לו עשר בנות וכו' the question is that if each daughter gets one tenth, than in case a person has ten daughters and one son there will be nothing left for the boy. Why is this question only according to רבי? How would the חכמים deal with this situation? They all agree to the principle of עישור נכסים.

### Response to last week's Point to Ponder:

The Gemara says that if a needy person doesn't want to take צדקה we offer it to him as a מתנה (gift). If he doesn't want to accept צדקה why would he be more receptive to accepting a gift?

When it comes to מתנה the recipient can say to themselves as follows: today I got a gift from ראובן and in the future I will give ראובן a gift. However if he accepts צדקה he can't make the same assumption, because he may never be able to give ראובן the same.

(רמב"ם הלכות מתנות עניים פ"ז הלכה ט' רדב"ז)