

Torah Perspective on Kindness & Charity

Perspectives Series

Source Sheet by Rabbi Joseph Dweck

1. Pirkei Avot 5:10

משנה אבות ה:י' א.

(10) There are four temperaments among men: the one who says "what is mine is mine, and what is yours is yours" -- that's an [average] temperament. And there are some who say that is the temperament of Sodom. [A second type is one who says] "what is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine" -- [that's an] *am ha'arets* (uneducated person). [A third type is one who says] "what is mine is yours, and what is yours is yours" -- [that's a] pious person. [A final type is one who says] "what is yours is mine, and what is mine is mine" -- [that's a] wicked person.

(י) ארבע מדות באדם. האומר שלי שלי ושלי שלי, זו מדה בינונית. ויש אומרים, זו מדת סדום. שלי שלי ושלי שלי, עם הארץ. שלי שלי ושלי שלי, רשע: חסיד. שלי שלי ושלי שלי, רשע:

2. Genesis 21:8

בראשית כ"א:ח' ב.

(8) The child grew up and was weaned, and Abraham held a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

(ח) ויגדל הילד ויגמל ויעש אברהם משתה גדול ביום הגמל את-יצחק:

3. Siddur, Edot HaMizrach 3:10:3

סידור נוסח עדות המזרח ג':י"ג' ג.

(10) Blessed are You L·rd, our G·d, & G·d of our fathers, G·d of Avraham, G·d of Yitshak & G·d of Yaacov. The great, the mighty & the awesome G·d. Exalted G·d. Who bestows good kindness. He possesses everything & recalls the kindness of the patriarchs. And brings the redeemer to their children's children, for His Name's sake, with love. King, helper, savior & a shield, blessed are You L·rd, Shield of Avraham.

(י) ברוך אתה יי, אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו, אלקי אברהם, אלקי יצחק ואלקי יעקב. הקל הגדול, הגבור והנורא, קל עליון, גומל חסדים טובים.

4. **Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 10:1**

(1) We are obligated to be careful about the commandment [to give] charity, more than any other positive commandment for charity is a sign of the righteous, the seed of Avraham, as it says "For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness..." "And the seat of Israel is not established nor is the True Faith preserved except through charity as it says "In righteousness shalt thou be established" nor shall Israel be redeemed except through charity as it says "Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and they that return of her with righteousness."

5. **Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 10:7-14**

(7) There are eight levels of charity, one above the other. The greatest level that has nothing above it is to strengthen the hand of a Jew who has become poor and give him a gift or loan or create a partnership with him or make up some work for him, so as strengthen his hand until he does not [any longer] need to ask others [for help]. And about this it is said (Leviticus 25:35), "and you shall strengthen the hand of a stranger and a resident and he shall live with you;" meaning, strengthen him until he no [longer] falls and becomes needy.
(8) Lower than that is when one gives charity to the poor and does not know to whom he is giving, and the poor person does not know from whom he is taking - since, behold, this is [performance of] the commandment for its own sake. Like this was the secret chamber which was in the Temple, to which the righteous would give secretly and from which the poor of the wealthy families would support themselves secretly. And approaching this is the one that gives to the charity box. And a person should not give to the charity box, unless he knows that the one

משנה תורה, הלכות מתנות עניים י"א:

(א) תִּבְיִן אָנוּ לְהִזְהֵר בְּמִצְוַת צְדָקָה יוֹתֵר מִכָּל מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה. וְשֶׁהַצְּדָקָה סִימָן לְצַדִּיק וְרַע אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ וְשֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (בראשית יח-ט) "כִּי יִדְעֹתֶיךָ לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצְנֶה אֶת בְּנָיו" (בראשית יח-ט) "לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה". וְאֵין כֶּסֶף יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתְכַּוֵּן וְדַת הָאֱמֶת עוֹמֶדֶת אֵלָּא בְּצְדָקָה וְשֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (ישעיה נד-יד) "בְּצְדָקָה תִּכְוֶנְנִי". וְאֵין יִשְׂרָאֵל נִגְאָלִין אֵלָּא בְּצְדָקָה וְשֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (ישעיה א-כז) "צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפָּט תִּפְדֶּה וְשָׁבִיהָ בְּצְדָקָה":

משנה תורה, הלכות מתנות עניים י"ז-י"ד:

(ז) שְׁמוּנָה מַעְלוֹת יֵשׁ בְּצְדָקָה זו לְמַעְלָה מִזוֹ. מַעְלָה גְּדוֹלָה וְשֶׁאֵין לְמַעְלָה מִמֶּנָּה זֶה הַמְחִזֵּק בְּיַד יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂמֹךְ וְנוֹתֵן לוֹ מִתְּנָה אוֹ הַלְוָאָה אוֹ עוֹשֶׂה עִמּוֹ שְׂתִפּוּת אוֹ מִמְצִיא לוֹ מְלָאכָה כְּדִי לְחַזֵּק אֶת יָדוֹ עַד שֶׁלֹּא יִצְטָרֵךְ לְבָרִיּוֹת לְשָׂאֵל. וְעַל זֶה נֶאֱמַר (ויקרא כה-לה) "וְהִחְזַקְתָּ בּוֹ גֵר וְתוֹשֵׁב וְחֵי עִמָּךְ" כְּלוֹמֵר הַחְזִק בּוֹ עַד שֶׁלֹּא יִפֹּל וְיִצְטָרֵךְ:
(ח) פְּחוֹת מִזֶּה הַנּוֹתֵן צְדָקָה לְעֵנִיִּים וְלֹא יִדַּע לְמִי נָתַן וְלֹא יִדַּע הָעֵנִי מִמִּי לָקַח. וְשֶׁהָיָה זוֹ מִצְוָה לְשִׂמְחָה. כְּגוֹן לְשִׂכַּת חֲשָׁאִים שֶׁהִיָּתָה בְּמִקְדָּשׁ. שֶׁהָיוּ הַצְּדִיקִים נוֹתְנִין בָּהּ בְּחֲשָׁאִי וְהָעֵנִיִּים כִּנִּי טוֹבִים מִתְּפָרֵגִים מִמֶּנָּה בְּחֲשָׁאִי. וְקָרוֹב לְזֶה הַנּוֹתֵן לְתוֹךְ קַפָּה שֶׁל צְדָקָה. וְלֹא יִתֵּן אָדָם לְתוֹךְ קַפָּה שֶׁל צְדָקָה אֵלָּא אִם כֵּן יוֹדֵעַ שֶׁהַמִּמְנָה נֶאֱמָר וְחֲכָם יוֹדֵעַ לְהִנְהִיג כְּשׁוֹרָה כְּרַבִּי חֲנֻנְיָה כּוֹ תְרַדְיוֹן:
(ט) פְּחוֹת מִזֶּה שֶׁיִּדַּע הַנּוֹתֵן לְמִי יִתֵּן וְלֹא יִדַּע הָעֵנִי מִמִּי לָקַח. כְּגוֹן גְּדוּלֵי הַחֲכָמִים שֶׁהָיוּ הוֹלְכִין בְּסֶתֶר וּמְשַׁלְּכִין הַמַּעוֹת

in charge of it is trustworthy and wise and knows how to manage it appropriately, like [was the case with] Rabbi Chananya ben Tradyon.

(9) Lower than that is when the giver knows to whom he is giving, but the poor person does not know from whom he is taking. An example of this were the greatest of the Sages who would secretly go and place the money at the entrances of the [homes of the] poor. And it is fitting to do like this. And it is a good level when the charity managers are not behaving appropriately.

(10) Lower than that is when the poor person knows from whom he took and the giver does not know. An example of this were the greatest of the Sages who would bundle money in their sheets and lower them behind them and [then] the poor would come and take [the money], so that they would not feel embarrassment.

(11) Lower than that is when one gives it to him in his hand before he asks.

(12) Lower than that is when he gives it to him after he asks.

(13) Lower than that is when he gives him less than what is fit, [but] with a pleasant demeanor.

(14) Lower than that is when he gives it to him sadly.

בְּפִתְחֵי הָעֲנִיִּים. וְכֹזֶה רָאוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת
וּמַעֲלָה טוֹבָה הִיא אִם אֵין הַמְּמַנִּין
בְּצִדְקָה נוֹהֲגִין פְּשׁוּרָה:

(י) פְּחוֹת מִזֶּה שְׂיִדַּע הָעֲנִי מִמִּי נָטַל וְלֹא
יָדַע הַנּוֹתֵן. כְּגוֹן גְּדוּלֵי הַחֲכָמִים שֶׁהָיוּ
צוֹרְרִים הַמַּעוֹת בְּסִדְיָנִיהֶן וּמִפְּשִׁילִין
לְאַחֲרֵיהֶן וּבָאִין הָעֲנִיִּים וְנוֹטְלִין כְּדִי
שְׂלֵא יִהְיֶה לָהֶן בּוֹשָׁה:
(יא) פְּחוֹת מִזֶּה שְׂיִתֵּן לוֹ בְּיָדוֹ קֶדֶם
שְׂיִשְׂאֵל:

(יב) פְּחוֹת מִזֶּה שְׂיִתֵּן לוֹ אַחַר שְׂיִשְׂאֵל:

(יג) פְּחוֹת מִזֶּה שְׂיִתֵּן לוֹ פְּחוֹת מִן הָרְאוּי
בְּסִבָּר פְּנִים יְפוֹת:

(יד) פְּחוֹת מִזֶּה שְׂיִתֵּן לוֹ בְּעֶצֶב: