

## REEH- AHAVAS SHOLOM ON TZEDAKA AND BRACHA FOR LIVELIHOOD

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In Devarim 15:10 we are told to surely give to the poor person. The Torah uses the double expression *noson tetain* to indicate the emphasis on the giving. We are also commanded in the same verse not to have a bad heart when we give because in the end, Hashem will give us brachos which will more than make up for any financial sacrifice on our part.

The Ahavas Sholom of Kossov points out that there are two types of givers. One type of giver acts immediately when he/she see the poor person and does not wait to be asked. The other type of giver waits until he/she is asked to give. Of course, the first type of giving is the best. This idea is expressed in Yeshaya 63:9 when the navi tells us that in all of Hashem's tribulations it was a hurting to Hashem as well. Hashem, who truly understands our pain, sent his agents in advance to see that we are not completely consumed and destroyed by our troubles. This is the meaning of the verse telling us to surely give. We should give to the poor person immediately and not wait till we hear the cries of pain. We should not wait to be motivated by compassion and feeling the other person's pain. We should try to be like Hakadosh Baruch Hu who wants to help immediately. This is another meaning of a 'bad heart'; it does not only mean selfishness but also the lack of feeling the other's pain. We are commanded by Hashem to give before we are forced to empathize with their tribulations which we should do in any case. We should step in before that really bad situation comes about.

The Ahavas Sholom then points out that in the third Bracha of our *birkas hamazon*, grace after meals we ask Hashem not to have rely on gifts from people but only from Hashem's hand which is always open full and ready to give. He then quotes from Kabbalistic sources that the soul is adam and the body is *basar adam*, flesh of man. When is this so? When the letter *alef* representing Hashem is attached to the letters *daled* and *mem* meaning that when we attach ourselves to Hashem we are *bsar adam*. But when we are not attached to Hashem as we should be we are just *basar vadam*, flesh and blood. The more we are attached to Hashem, the more we are taken care of by Hashem directly and not through agents. Countless stories are told of great tzaddikim who were poor yet they got by through Hashem's direct intervention. We are to try to emulate Hashem to the extent we can in this desire to give.

The Ahavas Sholom also points out that Hashem's 'hand' is not like ours. By human beings a full hand is closed and an empty hand is opened. By Hashem, his 'open hand is the source for all brachos. He is so willing to give us brachos without limitations if we only attach ourselves to him.