



# Gorgeous Giving

We are commanded to help our brethren when they falter or fall into a situation of hardship or misfortune. *“Vehechezakta bo” (Vayikra 25:35)*, strengthen him and help him regain his footing. This is a fundamental aspect of Judaism, consider every Jew your brother or sister, lend a hand to support, sustain and offer relief.

In Psalm 41, Dovid Hamelech characterizes true giving. One must be a *“maskil el dal” (Tehillim 31:2)*. One must know how to give with *“seichel”*, thought and consideration. Rav Pincus in *Tiferet Shimshon* describes two types of givers. When the first type of person is approached, he will listen to the problem and offer the asked for assistance. The other type, however, will take interest in the situation and skillfully ask questions to determine how best

to help. The difference lies in attitude. Is the one asking for help a random person or is he my brother? If he is my brother, I will do whatever I can to assess the circumstances and respond in the most effective way. Does he need physical help or emotional support? Is he well connected to a community or relatively unknown? Is he asking for one thing but really needs something else and is embarrassed to ask for it? If he is my sister or brother, I will seek out his welfare and try to be as proactive in helping as I can. Hashem treats us measure for measure. When we are in a difficult situation, *“yikra-eini ve-e’eneihu,” (Tehillim 91:15)*, when we call out Hashem will respond. However, those who take action and anticipate ways to help, *“terem yikrau veAni e-eneh” (Yeshayahu 65:24)*, even before we call out Hashem takes an interest in seeking goodness for us.

Another aspect of a *“maskil”* notes Rav Meir Chodosh, is knowing how to give. It takes cleverness to preserve another’s dignity, to give with sensitivity and at times creativity.

Rav Biderman quotes the *Zohar Hakadosh* who teaches that when Hashem wants to send a ‘gift’ to show someone His

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love, He will send him a person who needs tzedakah. Further, the *Chidah* writes that the letters preceding “kaf”, “samech” and “fay”, spelling “kesef”, are “yud”, “nun” and “ayin”, the letters that spell “ani”, one who is poor. Even before Hashem grants a person his money, Hashem has already determined to whom the money will go.

It is important to note, says Rav Zacks in *Menachem Tzion*, that the Torah does not write, “vehechezakta oto”, the classic form of saying “him”, rather “bo”, through him. Truly the one who gives becomes strengthened through the act of giving. *Siach Mordechai* adds that giving to others brings a person to a higher level of completeness. We are created to emulate Hashem, to give to others and look for ways to help others while maintaining their dignity to the greatest degree possible. ■

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