**RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS RE’AI תשע"ו**

**IT'S NOW WHAT YOU GIVE BUT HOW YOU GIVE IT**

The passuk (Devarim 15,7) talks about the mitzvah of *tzedakah*. The Tur (YorehDeah 249) writes that when one gives the *tzedakah* he must do so with goodness of heart and with joy. He must also feel the pain of the poor person and comfort him if possible. If one however gives with expressions of sadness then he loses his merit even if he gives a large sum of *tzedakah*. The Bais Yosef cites the source of the Tur and it is the passukולא ירע לבבך בתתך לו (Devarim 15,10). One is prohibited to have a bad heart when giving to the poor person.

We see from this that giving tzedakah is not about merely giving money even if it be a gracious amount but rather about sincerity love, joy, and feeling for the poor person that counts even more than the actual giving. The ShevetMussar brings an incredible story concerning a *rasha* whose entire life was replete with transgressions and now he fell sickly ill. As he was lying on his death bed, those surrounding his bed asked him if he wanted to eat some food and he said yes a roasted egg. Right before he ate the egg a poor person knocked at his door begging for some food to eat. When he inquired about the commotionhe responded by saying give the egg to the beggar. Three days later he passed away. A few days into the *shivah*, the deceased came to his son in a dream and said I never gave *tzedakah* with the exception of the egg that I gave to that beggar. When I died this act alone saved me from all my evil and entered me into Gan Eden. The ShevetMussar explains how can this one act of *tzedakah* save the *rasha* from living a life full of evil? The poor person was himself dying from starvation. By giving him the egg he was brought back to life. This act of *tzedakah* had a tremendous ripple effect. The beggar was now able to fulfill many more mitzvos in his lifetime, give birth to more children who would fulfill the Torah and mitzvos, who then would give birth to children etc. One will never know how far the reaching effect of his mitzvah of *tzedakah* can go.

This concept is hinted in the very letters of צדקה . In the gematriah system of א"ת ב"ש where for example, the first letter *aleph* can be replaced with the last letter ת, the second letter ב can be replaced with the second to last letter ש, the letter ג with ר etc., one will find that the letters of צדקה in this system also come out to צדקה, a very rare phenomenon. We can understand that this gematriah conveys that an act of*tzedakah* is calculated not only for the present moment symbolized by the aleph, but also its effect even in the future years and generations far away from now symbolized by the letter ת. One’s meritorious act of giving *tzedakah*now, will be considered as if one actually gave the *tzedakah* even five generations later. On this the passuk (Tehillim 113, 3) says וצדקתו עומדת לעד the merit of one’s *tzedakah* lasts forever.

I would like to share with you a beautiful *vort* on the *ShirHammaaos* that we say on Shabbos which I heard from my father RavTzvi Avigdor a”h. הזורעים בדמעה ברינה יקצורו the mitzvah of *tzedakah* is known as זריעה planting, for just like planting we don’t see the fruits of our labor immediately so too with *tzedakah*. There are two types of people who give tzedaka הזורעים בדמעה ברינה those who give with tears conveying unhappiness and wish I didn’t have to give it, and the second type who give with רינה joy. הלוך ילך ובכה the giver who gave without *simcha*, נושא משך הזרע will carry away from this *mitzvah* exactly what he planted. However, בוא יבוא ברינה the one who gives tzedakah to the poor with joy, נושא אלומותיו will get returns of bundles much more than one planted and expected.

Sometimes one can get annoyed by the barrage of collectors that one encounters during davening, at the Kosel, at weddings etc. Let us remember that it is not the amount that counts but rather the *simcha* in fulfilling the mitzvah. If one can gives even a dollar but does it with joy then his mitzvah has a booster rocket and off the charts returns. It is worth taking a moment to establish this mind set before the davening, weddingetc, for one never knows what the ripple effect can be due to his act of kindness. Even a dollar, if given with a smile and a warm greeting, might remove a beggar momentarily from his misery and depression, and in circumstances that we should never know about, might even save his life ….

Gut Shabbos

Rav Brazil