

The Message of Chessed

By Reb T

Welcome back to the *Bi Weekly Lecture Series With Reb T*, The show where we talk a topic per session with some practical lessons

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The Shiur is dedicated for the Refuah sheleimah for Sara odol bas chana Leah and all those others sick with corona and other ailments

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Sources found with the help of sefaria.org unless otherwise noted

Growing up I always felt a certain special affinity towards giving and helping others. I didn't know what it was called at the time, and only later did I realize that I felt a powerful drive and surge toward what is called in our lexicon as "Chessed." You see, everyone has their calling and what they can do/contribute and what they are good at. Hashem gives special talents and innate abilities to each person. There will never be another person exactly like you, there never was someone exactly like you, and there is no-one else in the world exactly like you in the present.

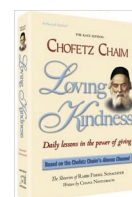
You have to find your calling, your passions, your abilities, and pursue it. Whatever your strengths and talents are, you have to find them, use them and do great things with them. You are supposed to love what you do and do what you love. For some they are supposed to learners, some workers, some go getters, but for all of us, we can harness the message and the power of chessed.

IF you are miserable at your job, that's probably not what you are supposed to be doing. If you love trains, you probably should be doing something in that realm. IF you feel an affinity towards plays and writing, you probably should pursue that. When I was in Israel, I loved being able to be a big brother to a child as well as running a food packing mission during the week, so I made sure to be involved in those things every week,.

Now, I realize I love radio, and speak, so I do different shows and podcasts (i.e. parsha, pirkei avos, daf, OT), including this lecture series, because I love the idea of being able to share audio for Torah and OT, and I would do only radio as my main job if I could. (if it paid :)).

Chessed is a powerful tool to make the world a better place with helping others. You need to take your passion and your innate abilities to hopefully make the world a better place. The message of Chessed, which is a pillar of the world, is to find how we can each help make the world a better and more giving place.

Ahavas chessed, loving kindness, is a level of not only doing for others, but LOVING to do for others. What can I do to help others? How can I help others? What can I contribute to make someone else's life easier. It could be a ride for someone, hosting for meals, cooking for those who lost someone gd forbid, cooking for someone who had a baby, lending books to those who need, etc. The possibilities are endless. The Chofetz Chaim has a beautiful book all about his topic with a lesson a day, and I highly recommend the book of Sefer Ahavas Chessed. See side pic—available in Jewish stores or Amazon.



During these times when we can't daven with a minyan nor safely tovel keilim in a mikvah, what can we do? I strongly believe in the idea of using this time to focus on our families, and Bh I'm so grateful to be able to focus on them with working at home remotely for half the day, seeing kids on google meet.

As the famous saying goes, "Chessed starts at home." Why not use this time to understand what it means to do chessed and connect to others, even when we feel so physically distant? I know I'm not alone in feeling that we're really in the throes of משיח, and we know that we've ended up in this galus, the mikdash was destroyed (one of them) due to sinas chinam. Why not use this time to bring more ahavas chinam with Chessed actions into the works, which could be the key to rebuild the mikdash-perhaps even an extra auspicious time to do this, as we commemorate the loss of Rebbe Akiva's students, who hadn't achieved the proper levels of ahavas chinam?

Also, Tzaraas and quarantining, which we just saw in a few weeks ago, came about many times due to the sin of Loshon hora. We are now in quarantine and maybe the thing to work on is loshon hora. I recently heard I forget where that just as loshon hora spreads invisibly so does this terrible corona disease. Talking and speech is all we have now to keep in touch as we can't physically go near anyone. I also don't remember where I heard this, but maybe the solution would be to counteract loshon hora by being involved with loshon tov, using only good words which itself can be a Chessed for many people.

So many examples can be found in the torah and we'll see some. There's a great Tv episode of the show "what would you do?" with check lost on floor and money on floor, only the religious Jew sought to find person to return money to, hashavas aveida, a real Chessed act.

Let's look at some sources of this fundamental trait for us to have in this world.

Pirkei Avot 1:2

שמעון הצדיק היתה משיגרי כנסת הגדולה. הוא היה אומר, על שלשה דברים העולם עומד, על התורה ועל העבודה ועל גמילות חסדים. Shimon the Righteous was one of the last of the men of the great assembly. He used to say: the world stands upon three things: the Torah, the Temple service, and the practice of acts of piety.

בראשית ג:כא

ויעשה אלהים לאדם ולאישתו כתנות עור וילבשם: (פ)

And the LORD God made garments of skins for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

Bereshit Rabbah 8:5

R. Simon said: When the time came for the Holy Blessed One to make the first human being, The Ministering Angels made themselves into competing counsels... The angel of Kindness said, "Create them, for they will do acts of loving kindness."

One of the prototypical characters of this trait is Avraham avinu, one of my favorite figures in all of tanach.

בראשית יח:א-ז

ויראה אליו ה' באלני ממרם והוא יושב פתח האהל פתם היום: וישא עיניו וירא והנה שלשה אנשים נצבים עליו וירא וירץ לקראתם מפתח האהל וישתחו ארצה: ויאמר אד' אם-נא מצאתי חן בעיניך אל-נא תעבר מעל עבדך: גח-נא מעט-מים ורחצו רגליכם והשענו תחת היעץ: ואקחה פת-לחם וסעדו לבכם אתר תעבדו כי-על-כן עברתם על-עבדכם ויאמרו לו: תעשה כדברך:...

The LORD appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot. Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them and, bowing to the ground, he said, "My lords,

if it please you, do not go on past your servant. Let a little water be brought; bathe your feet and recline under the tree. And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves; then go on—seeing that you have come your servant's way.” They replied, “Do as you have said.”...

Gemara mentions from this episode that greeting guests is greater than greeting the shechina as Avraham left Hashem's presence to go to the guests.

[רש"י על בראשית יח:א:18:1](#)

וירא אליו. לבקר את החולה. אמר רבי תמא בר חנינא, יום שלישי למילתו הנה, ובא הקב"ה ושאל בשלומי (בבא AND THE LORD APPEARED UNTO HIM to visit the sick man. R. Hama the son of Hanina said: it was the third day after his circumcision and the Holy One, blessed be He, came and enquired after the state of his health (Bava Metzia 86b)—bikkur cholim

Avraham was in such pain but ran to help them. He said little and did alot—going above and beyond like we should in good deeds.

[aish.com:](#)

The epitome of the correct balance of chesed is Abraham. He certainly had a natural propensity for chesed, however he did not merely allow his natural inclinations to lead him blindly, rather he harnessed and even negated his chesed when necessary. On many occasions throughout the Torah, Abraham was placed in situations where he was forced to curtail his chesed.(5) Avraham succeeded in these difficult tests, thereby showing that his chesed was not directed by natural inclinations but by fear of God.

—>Important to realize to have proper Chessed and compassion and not misplace kindness or ompassion. Need to be firmly rooted in mitzvoth and torah and done in right manner to right people and situations. Think of Shaul hamelech saving Agag.

We need to change from a Selfish attitude versus selfless attitude—always thinking of others how to help.

Abraham is trait of chessed , whole Hebrew nation came about from him, the whole Jewish people is based on the idea of chessed

—>Chessed is not just the big things like hashcnassas chosson Kallah, mevaker choleh, visiting shiva, and hosting guests but littler thing counts too, ie sending a meal for family with new baby, phone call to someone sad, sending a gift to a friend, giving a ride to someone, giving advice or a few dollars to someone—the possibilities are endless.... and remember chessed begins at home with family.

[Sotah 14a:6](#)

Rabbi Samlai taught: With regard to the Torah, its beginning is an act of kindness and its end is an act of kindness. Its beginning is an act of kindness, as it is written: “And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skin, and clothed them” (Genesis 3:21). And its end is an act of kindness, as it is written: “And he was buried in the valley in the land of Moab” (Deuteronomy 34:6).

[Baba Metzia 71a](#)

דתני רב יוסף

”אם כסף תלוה את עמי (Shemos 22)

את העני עמך, עמי ונכרי - עמי קודם, עני ועשיר - עני קודם, ענייך ועניי עירך - ענייך קודמין, עניי עירך ועניי עיר אחרת - עניי עירך קודמין

—>Take care of those around you, your own town first. Mentioned by tzedakah, Kal vachomer by chessed. Support local business/restaurants/supermarkets and chessed organizations ie local food banks first esp. during corona craze

Daily giving.org/tzedakah Yomi like what rambam explains each tzedakah and charity act, literally a dollar a day deducted from your credit card over the month to a different organization each day (and they email you where it goes each day), we do it and it's fantastic.

Think about the slave in the torah, how we are supposed to treat him or her as compared to what a slave was treated like in history (terribly) compared to the kindness the torah expects of us.

[Jeremiah 2:2](#)

הֲלֹךְ גִּקְרָאתִי בְּאֲזִנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר ה' זָכַרְתִּי לְךָ יְהוָה נְעוּרֶיךָ אֲהַבְתָּ כְּלוּלְתֶיךָ לְכַתֵּךְ אֶחָרֶיךָ בְּמִדְבָּר בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא יְרוּעָה:

Go proclaim to Jerusalem: Thus said the LORD: I accounted to your favor The devotion of your youth, Your love as a bride— How you followed Me in the wilderness, In a land not sown.

—>Easy to do Chessed in the honeymoon phases of life—when first married, kid first born, when we were first made a nation, harder to do as years progress, but remember the bridegroom days of our nation and recapture that, remember the first days of marriage and recapture that, remember how little our kids were and capture that and rekindle the fire of need to do more for our nation, our spouses and our kids just like the beginning days and years.

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Barzilai and David:

[I Kings 2:7](#)

ולבני ברזלי הגלעדי תעשה חסד והיו באכלי שלחנה פייכו קרבו אלי בברתי מפני אבשלום אחיך:

Beginning of day they end of day and beg of life thru end of life full of chessed just as Torah starts creation and caring for first human couple and ends with chessed burying Moshe

—>Needs to be ingrained in our personality to be a giving person, a Chessed person, a GENEROUS person in our time, money, help, resources, etc. Our being should radiate Chessed and be a livingful of chessed. Don't be someone who happens to do chessed. Be someone who lives Chessed and being radiates Chessed to help everyone around you. A truly generous person is always giving, not that he happens to give sometimes.

[Kli Yakar On Genesis 24:14](#)

She You have proven for Your servant, for Yitzchak. Rashi explains, she is worthy for him that she is a doer of chessed. This topic is juxtaposed with the topic of Ephron the Chiti, because he too was from the family of Canaan, and Ephron was begrudging of eye and therefore he [God] commanded to stay far from the Canaanim, ... And from here Eliezer learned that he didn't need to check Rivkah except with this trait--if she is generous [lit. has a good eye] and does kindness, and there he said "I will not demand from her anything but that she give me to drink, and if she responds, 'drink, and I will also give your camels to drink' then certainly she is a doer of kindness, that she will give me more than what I ask, and if so she You have proven for Your servant, for Yitzchak, for his entire household is garbed in salvation for other creatures"

—>Not just enough to do chessed but to LOVE to do chessed.

[Vayikrah Rabbah 34](#)

והרי דברים קל וחמר, ומה אם מי שעשה חסד עם מי שאינו צריך לחסד פירע הקדוש ברוך הוא לבניו, מי שעשה חסד עם מי שצריך, על אחת כמה וכמה.

[Deuteronomy 22](#)

לא תראה את־שור אחיך או את־שׂוֹר נִדְחִים והתעלמת מהם השב תשיבם לאחיך:

If you see your fellow's ox or sheep gone astray, do not ignore it; you must take it back to your fellow.

Haseivas Aveida-returning lost thing

ואם־לא קרוב אחיך אליך ולא ידעתו ואספתו אל־תוך ביתך והיה עמך עד דרש אחיך אתו והשבתו לו:

If your fellow does not live near you or you do not know who he is, you shall bring it home and it shall remain with you until your fellow claims it; then you shall give it back to him.

If I may humbly suggest although others may have said this before, when the pasuk says "Lo Karov Achicha" it maybe doesn't mean that he's physically distant, but emotionally distant, someone you don't have a relationship to, a stranger, and nevertheless you are supposed to extend your hand and help him.

—>Although chessed begins at home, sometimes we need to help strangers in our midst. Those who may not have a home, a meal, supplies, money, resources. Those may be the ones that really need our help.

Pasukim go on to say :

וְכֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְחֵמְרוֹ וְכֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְשִׂמְלֹתָיו וְכֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְכָל־אֲבֵדֵת אֲחִידָה אֲשֶׁר־תִּאֲבֹד מִמֶּנּוּ וּמִצְאָתָהּ לֹא תִוְכַל לְהִתְעַלֵּם: (ס)
You shall do the same with his donkey; you shall do the same with his garment; and so too shall you do with anything that your fellow loses and you find: you must not remain indifferent.

לֹא־תִרְאֶה אֶת־חֵמְרוֹר אֲחִידָה אוֹ שׂוֹרוֹ נִפְלִים בְּדֶרֶךְ וְהִתְעַלַּמְתָּ מֵהֶם הֲקָם תִּקְוֶה עִמּוֹ: (ס)
If you see your fellow's donkey or ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it; you must help him raise it

...

לֹא־תִחְרֹשׁ בְּשׂוֹר־וּבַתְּמֹר יַתְדּוֹ: (ס)
You shall not plow with an ox and and donkey together.

—>This is the mitzvah of avoiding tzar Bailey chaim, causing harm to an animal. We have to be kind to animals, especially if they are our own animals.

chabad.org:

In fact, the Torah commands every person to ensure his animals are fed—and in the proper time. Actually, we are commanded to feed our animals before we eat ourselves. The Talmud⁷ (brachot 40a) derives this from the verse (deutoronomy 11:15),⁸ “And I will give grass in your field for your livestock”—and only thereafter “and you will eat and be sated.”

shechitauk.org:

*Shechita is the Jewish religious and humane method of slaughtering permitted animals and poultry for food. It is the only method of producing kosher meat and poultry allowed by Jewish law. **It is a most humane method**... The timeallowed practice of shechita, marked as it is by compassion and consideration for the welfare of the animal, has been a central pillar in the sustaining of Jewish life for millennia. Shechita is performed by a highly trained shochet. **The procedure consists of a rapid and expert transverse incision with an instrument of surgical sharpness (a chalaf), which severs the major structures and vessels at the neck. This causes an instant drop in blood pressure in the brain and immediately results in the irreversible cessation of consciousness. Thus, shechita renders the animal insensible to pain, dispatches and exsanguinates in a swift action, and fulfils all the requirements of humaneness and compassion.***

chabad.org on parshas Shemini (Zalman Posner)

*Among these prohibited birds enumerated we find the **chasida**, translated as "stork." The literal meaning of chasida is "kindly," an appropriate name, says Rashi, **because this bird is helpful to its friends, and shares its food with them.***

Nachmanides observes that the forbidden fowl are predatory.

In this case, asks the Gerrer Rebbe, since the bird is kindly and sympathetic, then according to Nachmanides it belongs among the kosher instead of the forbidden fowl.

The Gerrer drew an interesting moral from this. The chasida is helpful to its friends, but is indifferent to the plight of birds of another feather. Kindliness toward one's own is not enough. If we differentiate between a friend in need and a stranger in like circumstances, between our kind and another, we are not kindly. Goodness must be indiscriminate - whoever needs help is deserving.

—>So we cant just be helpful to those we are friends with, but especially others we don't know or like, who may even be our "enemy" (we shouldn't even have enemies but love all people with ahavat Chinam). Also, we cant just take care of our own kind, jews, also nonjews, and not just humankind, but animals, the environment, and the world was well—kind to animals, clean up trash, etc.

Also,

chaba.org Devarim 32:11

בְּצִפְנֵי שָׁרָף יַעֲיֵר קֶנֶן עַל-גִּזְזָלָיו יִרְחֹף יִפְרֹשׁ כַּנְּפָיו יִקְוֶהוּ יִשְׁאַהוּ עַל-אֶבְרָתוֹ

As an eagle awakens its nest, hovering over its fledglings, it spreads its wings, taking them and carrying them on its pinions.

[Rashi on the pasuk:](#)

As an eagle awakens its nest: He guided them [Israel] with mercy and compassion like an eagle, which is merciful towards its own fledglings and does not enter its nest suddenly. [Rather,] it beats and flaps its wings above its young between one tree and another, between one branch and another, in order that its young should awaken and have the strength to receive it.

hovering over its fledglings: [The eagle] does not impose its [whole] body upon them. Rather, it hovers above them, touching them and yet not quite touching them. So too, is the Holy One, Blessed is He. [As in the verse:] “We did not find the Almighty great in power” (Job 37:23).

When He came to give the Torah to Israel, He did not reveal Himself to them from one direction [thus concentrating His power at one point, as it were], but rather, from four directions,

spreading its wings, taking them: When it [the eagle] comes to move [its fledglings] from place to place, it does not pick them up with its feet, as do other birds. Other birds are afraid of the eagle, which soars very high and flies above them. For this reason, it [the other bird] carries them with its feet because of the eagle [above them]. **The eagle, however, is afraid only of an arrow. Therefore, it carries its young on its wings, saying, “It is better that an arrow pierce me, rather than pierce my young.” So too, the Holy One, Blessed is He, [says]: “I carried you on eagles’ wings” (Exod. 19:4). [I.e.,] when the Egyptians pursued [the children of Israel] and overtook them at the [Red] Sea, they cast arrows and catapulted rocks [at Israel].**

Immediately, “The angel of God moved... [behind them... and the pillar of cloud] came between the camp of Egypt [and the camp of Israel]” (Exod. 14:19-20) [for Israel’s protection]. —

[Mechilta 19:4]

Shiluach hakan

[chabad.org devarim 22 6-7 with rash](http://chabad.org/devarim/22/6-7-with-rash)

6 If a bird's nest chances before you on the road, on any tree, or on the ground, and [it contains] fledglings or eggs, if the mother is sitting upon the fledglings or upon the eggs, you shall not take the mother upon the young.

7 You shall send away the mother, and [then] you may take the young for yourself, in order that it should be good for you, and you should lengthen your days.

in order that it should be good for you, [and you should lengthen your days]: If in the case of a commandment easy [to fulfill, like this one] for which there is no monetary expense, Scripture says, “[Do this] in order that it should be good for you, and that you should lengthen your days,” then how much greater is the reward for [the fulfillment of] commandments that are more difficult to observe [or for which there is a monetary expense]. — [Sifrei 22:64, Chul. 142a]

—>Kindly to animals and kindly to parents both tell of long life reward

[Exodus 23](#)

כִּי תִפְגַּע שׂוֹר אֹיְבֶיךָ אוֹ חֲמֹרוֹ תֵּלֶעָה הַיָּשׁוּב תְּשִׁיבֵהוּ לּוֹ: (ס)

When you encounter your enemy's ox or donkey wandering, you must take it back to him.

כִּי־תִרְאֶה חֲמֹר שֶׁנֶּאֱדָר רֵבִיל תַּחַת מִשְׁאָלוֹ וְחִדְלֹתָ מֵעֲזֹב לוֹ עֲזֹב תֵּעֲזֹב עִמּוֹ: (ס)

When you see the donkey of your enemy lying under its burden and would refrain from raising it, you must nevertheless raise it with him.

It's easy to help a friend. You want to help him, you like him. It's much harder to help an “enemy.”

[Deuteronomy 10](#)

עֲשֵׂה מִשְׁפָּט יְתוּם וְאֶלְמֶנֶה וְאִתְּבֵן לֹד לֶחֶם וְשִׂמְלָה:

but upholds the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and befriends the stranger, providing him with food and clothing.—

וְאַתְּבָתֶּם אֶת־הַגֵּר כִּי־גֵרִים הָיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:

You too must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

[Leviticus 25](#)

כִּי־יָמוּד אֲחִיךָ וּמָטָה יָדוֹ עִמָּךָ וְהִתְחַנְקָהּ בְּיָדְךָ וְתוֹשֵׁב וְתִי עִמָּךָ:

If your kinsman, being in straits, comes under your authority, and you hold him as though a resident alien, let him live by your side:

אַל־תִּקַּח מֵאִתּוֹ גְּשָׁח וְתִרְבִּית וְנִרְאִיתָ מֵאֲלֹהֶיךָ וְתִי אֲחִיךָ עִמָּךָ:

do not exact from him advance or accrued interest, but fear your God. Let him live by your side as your kinsman.

אַת־כֹּסְפֶךָ לֹא־תִתֶּן לוֹ בְּגִשָׁח וּבְמִרְבִּית לֹא־תִתֶּן אֲכֹלֶךָ:

Do not lend him your money at advance interest, or give him your food

Fear Hashem by taking in your brother, it is a very strong commandment to be involved in chessed.

[Psalms 89:3: תהילים פט:ג:39](#)

כִּי־אֶמְרֶתִי עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבְנֶנָה שְׁמַיִם | תִּכְוֶן אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָּהֶם:

I declare, “Your steadfast love is confirmed forever; there in the heavens You establish Your faithfulness.”

[Leviticus 19:17-18](#)

לֹא־תִשְׂנֹא...וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ אָנִי ה'

You shall not hate your kinsfolk...Love your fellow as yourself: I am the LORD.

[Jerusalem Talmud Nedarim 30b:1](#)

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Rabbi Akiva says: This is the great principal of the Torah.

[Shabbat 31a:6: שבת לא א:6:31a](#)

שוב מעשה בגוי אחד שקבא לפני שמאי. אמר לו: גיירני על מנת שתלמדני כל התורה כולה כשאני עומד על רגל אחת! דחפו באמת הבגין שבדודו. בא לפני הלל, גייריה. אמר לו: דעלך סיני לחברך לא תעביד — זו היא כל התורה כולה, דחפו באמת הבגין שבדודו. בא לפני הלל, גייריה. אמר לו: דעלך סיני לחברך לא תעביד, זיל גמור There was another incident involving one gentile who came before Shammai and said to Shammai: Convert me on condition that you teach me the entire Torah while I am standing on one foot. Shammai pushed him away with the builder's cubit in his hand. This was a common measuring stick and Shammai was a builder by trade. The same gentile came before Hillel. He converted him and said to him: **That which is hateful to you do not do to another; that is the entire Torah, and the rest is its interpretation. Go study.**

Do not do unto others as you would not want done to you; treat others as you would like to be treated (The golden rule), explained by Hillel to a prospective student “and the whole torah is commentary”

[Hosea 2:21](#)

וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי לְעוֹלָם וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךָ לִי בְּצִדְקָה וּבְמִשְׁפָּט וּבְחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים:

[Exodus 34](#)

נִצַּר חֶסֶד לְאֵלִפִּים נִשְׂאָ עֵנוֹ וּפְשַׁע וְחַטָּאָה וְנִקְהָה לֹא יִנְקָה פֶקֶד | עֵנוֹן אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים וְעַל־בָּנֵי עַל־שְׁלֹשִׁים וְעַל־רִבְעִים:

Pays back Chessed for many more generations than punishes for sins

[Sukkah 49b](#)

R. Hama b. Papa stated: Any man who is endowed with grace is known to be a God-fearing man, for it is said, ‘But the loving kindness of the Lord is from everlasting time to everlasting time to

them that fear Him.” R. Elazar further stated: What is it that is written, “She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the Torah of loving kindness is on her tongue?” ([Proverbs 31:26](#)): Is there then a Torah of loving kindness and a Torah which is not of loving kindness? Rather Torah [which is studied] for its own sake is a ‘Torah of loving kindness’, whereas Torah [which is studied] for an ulterior motive is a Torah which is not of loving kindness. There are those who say, **Torah [which is studied] in order to teach it is a ‘Torah of loving kindness’,** but Torah [which is] not [studied] in order to teach it is a Torah which is not of loving kindness.

—>Can’t just learn about Chessed in theory, have to put it into practice. Torah is meant to be lived and done through action not just learned in the study halls.

א"ר אלעזר גדול העושה צדקה יותר מכל הקרבנות שנאמר ([משלי כא ג](#)) עשה צדקה ומשפט נבחר לה' מזבח וא"ר אלעזר גדולה גמילות חסדים יותר מן הצדקה שנאמר ([הושע יב](#)) זרעו לכם לצדקה וקצרו לפי חסד אם אדם זורע ספק אוכל ספק אינו אוכל אדם קוצר ודאי אוכל

R. Elazar stated: **Greater is he who performs charity than [he who offers] all the sacrifices,** for it is said, “To do charity and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice” ([Proverbs 21:3](#)). R. Elazar further stated: **Acts of loving kindness (gemilut hasadim) are greater than charity (tzedakah),** for it is said, “Sow to yourselves according to your charity (tzedakah), but reap according to your hesed” ([Hosea 10: 12](#)); when one sows, it is doubtful whether he will eat [the harvest] or not, but when one reaps, he will certainly eat.

[מיכה ו:ח](#)

הגיד לך אדם מה טוב ומה-ה' דורש ממך כי אם-עשות משפט **ואהבת חסד** והצנע לכת עם-אלהיך: (פ)

[Sukkah 49b: 8](#)

what the Lord does require of you; only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8)? “To do justly”; this is justice. **“To love mercy”; this is acts of kindness.**

[Sukkah 49b:11-12](#)

The Sages taught that acts of kindness are superior to charity in three respects: Charity can be performed only with one's money, while acts of kindness can be performed both with his person and with his money. Charity is given to the poor, while acts of kindness are performed both for the poor and for the rich. Charity is given to the living, while acts of kindness are performed both for the living and for the dead.

—>Every act of chessed makes more into a chessed person like rambam explains As we've said before, Kids learn from what we do much more than what we say. We can talk til we are blue in the face but kids really learn from what they see us, the adults/parents/role models do. When they see a home full of chessed, full of giving charity in our time, actions,

[Proverbs 21:21](#)

רָדַף צְדָקָה וַחֲסֵד יִמָּצֵא חַיִּים צְדָקָה וְכָבוֹד:

[Mishneh Torah, Mourning 14:1א:1](#) משנה תורה, הלכות אבל יד:

It is a rabbinic positive precept to visit the sick, comfort the mourners, escort the dead, dower the bride, accompany the [departing] guests — — as well as to cheer the bride and the groom, and to assist them in whatever they need. Even though all these precepts are of rabbinic origin, they are implied in the biblical verse: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18); that is, whatever you would have others do to you, do to your brothers in Torah and precepts. הָרִי הֵן בְּכָלֵל (ויקרא יט יח) "וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כָּמוֹךָ". כָּל הַדְּבָרִים שְׂאֵתָהּ רוֹצֵה שְׂיַעֲשׂוּ אוֹתָם לְךָ אֲחֵרִים.

Chessed is not something that is just flurry or nice. IT is an inherent mitzvah obligation on all of us to do.

[Avot D'Rabbi Natan 4:5](#)

On acts of kindness. How so? It says (Hosea 6:6), “For I desire kindness, not a well-being offering.” **The world was created from the very beginning with kindness**, as it says (Psalms 89:3), “For I have said that the world will be built on kindness, and the heavens will be established on Your faith.”

—>We don't need the honor or the kavod, we should actually flee from kavod, Its better to do Chessed in private anonymously, humbly without fanfare or people knowing about it.

[Moed Katan 16b:9ט"ז ב:ט"ז](#)

The Gemara explains: He interprets it not as a reference to Torah, but as referring to acts of charity and **loving-kindness, which should certainly be performed in private.**

[Bamidbar Rabbah 8](#)

And what did the king David command? He commanded that they carry Shaul's casket from tribe to tribe. As Shaul's casket entered each tribe's territory all the men, women and children came out in order to perform an act of loving kindness to Shaul and his sons and thereby all of Israel would fulfill its obligation to loving kindness. This went on until they reached the land of his portion on the border of Jerusalem. **Since the Holy One saw that they did loving kindness to Shaul and fulfilled the judgement of the Givonites He was immediately filled with mercy and sent rain upon the land,**

[Mishneh Torah Torah Study 5:8](#)

Whosoever prevents his disciples from rendering him service, deprives him of loving kindness and unyokes him of the fear of Him Who is in heaven.

[Mishneh Torah, Human Dispositions 1:6א:1](#) משנה תורה, הלכות דעות א:

In explaining this commandment the sages taught thus: **Even as He is called gracious, be thou gracious**; even as He is called merciful, be thou merciful; even as He is called holy, be thou holy.

[Pirkei D'rebbi Eliezer 17:5](#)

Whence do we learn (the duty of) showing loving-kindness to mourners? From Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal. The palace of Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, was near the market-place. When any corpse was carried through the market-place, she would go forth from her palace, and she clapped with the palms of her hands and praised with her mouth, and she followed the corpse ten steps. Concerning her, Elijah, be he remembered for good, prophesied (and said): "In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel" ([2 Kings 9:36](#)). But over the limbs which were (employed in) showing loving-kindness, the dogs had no power, as it is said, "And they went || to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands

[Avodah Zara 17b](#)

Hanina replied: Happy are you, for you have been arrested on five charges, but you will be saved; woe is me who was arrested on one charge and I will not be saved; **for you have occupied yourself with the study of Torah and acts of loving kindness**, whereas I occupied myself with Torah alone.

[Tur Haaroach Deutronomy 23:21](#)

למען יברכך ה' אלוקיך, "in order that the Lord your G'd will bless you;" **by doing a deed of loving kindness with one's brother, such as helping him with an interest-free loan, one acquires the merit that qualifies one to receive a special blessing by Hashem.**

-->Dont do things to be rewarded or compensated especially acts of Chessed .Do it because it is the right thing to do to help others. Help others "Lo al manas lkabel pras" as pirkei Avos explains regarding serving Hashem)

[Sefer Haikkarim maamar 4: chapter 16](#)

The kindness of God and the mercy He bestows upon all His creatures are **based upon pure loving kindness**, and are not in the nature of compensation

[Daf Shevui to Sukkah 49b](#)

A few more statements by R. Elazar concerning charity and acts of loving kindness. **R. Elazar admits that it's not easy, it is precious, difficult. Nevertheless, for someone who fears the Lord, it is not so difficult.** It seems that God makes things easier for those who fear him.

[Rabbeinu Bahya בבנינו בחיי](#)

[Shemot, Chapter 14:21](#)

The 72-lettered name of G'd represents the fourth attribute (emanation) of חסד, “loving kindness.”

[קב הישר Kav HaYashar](#)
[Chapter 66](#)

When Hashem's four-letter name, is expanded into its constituents using the letter *yud* as the “filling” [i.e., ה"י ו"י ה"י; Tikkunei Zohar Chadash 122b] it has the numerical value 72, which is the same as the value of the word *chessed* [“lovingkindness”].

[Pirkei Avot 5:26](#)

Ben Heh-Heh used to say: According to the effort is the reward—Lfum tzaarah Agra.

—> *The more exertion in an act of chessed, the more reward you get; harder it is more meritorious it is (don't just do it for the reward though)*

[Radak on Genesis 18:3:2:בי"ג:ג'ב"ד](#)

It is an act of **loving kindness** to welcome guests into one's home in order to honour them and to look after their personal requirements, such as letting them wash up and stay overnight.

[Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer 44:11א"א:מ"ד:מ"ד](#)

Did Jethro show **loving-kindness** to all Israel? But did he not show **loving-kindness** to Moses our teacher alone?...Hence thou mayest learn || **that whosoever shows loving-kindness unto one of the great men of Israel is considered as though he had shown loving-kindness unto Israel.**...Because of the **loving-kindness** which he showed, his children were saved from among the Amalekites.

We are all responsible for one another, use as saving one person is as if he saved the entire world, so too doing chessed for one person is as if he did kindness for the whole world

[Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer 16:3:ג'ג:ט"ז:ט"ז](#)

Whence do we learn of the service of **loving-kindness** for bridegrooms? We learn from the Holy One, blessed be He; for He Himself bestowed **loving-kindness** upon Adam and his help-mate

[Rabbeinu Bachya, Vayikra 23](#)

The etrog is taken to represent the righteous person who is both a scholar and performs deeds of loving kindness and observes the commandments. —Sweet smelling and tasting

[Leviticus 19:9:ט:ט:ט](#)

וּבְקַצְרְכֶם אֶת־הַקָּצִיר אַרְצְכֶם לֹא תִכְלְוֶה פְּאֵת שְׂדֵךְ לַקָּצֵר וְלִקְטוּת קְצִירֵיךָ לֹא תִלְקֹט:
When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest.

Leket, Shichichah, Peah

encyclopedia.com:

gleanings, forgotten produce, and the corners of the field, talmudic designation of three portions of the harvest which the farmer was enjoined to leave for the benefit of the poor and the stranger.

wikipedia.com:

The poor tithe, or poor man's tithe (**Hebrew**: מַעֲשֵׂר עָנִי ma'sar ani), also referred to as the pauper's tithe or the third tithe, is a law in **Judaism**. It requires that one tenth of produce grown in the third and sixth years of the seven-year **sabbatical** cycle be given to the **Levites** and the poor.

The sabbath year (shmita; Hebrew: שְׁמִיטָה, literally "release"), also called the sabbatical year or shəvi'it (שְׁבִיעִית, literally "seventh"), is the seventh year of the seven-year agricultural cycle mandated by the **Torah** for the **Land of Israel**^[1] and is observed in contemporary **Judaism**. During shmita, the land is left to lie **fallow** and all agricultural activity, including plowing, planting, pruning and harvesting, is forbidden by **halakha** (Jewish law). Other cultivation techniques (such as watering, fertilizing, weeding, spraying, trimming and mowing) may be performed as a preventive measure only, not to improve the growth of trees or other plants. Additionally, any fruits or herbs which grow of their own accord and where no watch is kept over them are deemed hefker (ownerless) and may be picked by anyone.^[2] A variety of laws also apply to the sale, consumption and disposal of shmita produce. All debts, except those of foreigners, were to be remitted.^[3]

Tsedakah- 1/10 to 1/5 of money (or time, rabbi Feinstein)

[Ketubot 67a:13-67b:2](#)

The Sages taught: Concerning an orphan boy and an orphan girl who have come and appealed to be supported by the charity fund, the distributors provide for the orphan girl first and afterward they provide for the orphan boy. This is because it is the way of a man to circulate about the entryways to ask for charity, and it is not a woman's way to circulate for charity. Therefore, her need is greater.

[Yalkut Shimoni on Torah 251:7 & Jerusalem Talmud Ta'anit 21a:1](#)

This comes to teach you that **anyone who occupies himself with Torah and acts of kindness merits to take shelter in the shadow of the Holy One.**

[Berakhot 5a:24-5b:2](#)

...if one engages in Torah and **acts of charity**, his transgressions are forgiven...

—>Each chessed act is like a shield for us, a protection from harsh degrees or from punishments of sins

[Mishnah Peah 1:1א:א](#) משנה פאה א:א:1

אלו דברים שאין להם שעור. הפאה, והבפורים, והראיון, וגמילות חסדים, ותלמוד תורה. אלו דברים שאדם אוכל פרותיהן בעולם הזה והקרו קיימת לו לעולם הבא. כבוד אב ואם, וגמילות חסדים, והבאת שלום בין אדם לחברו, ותלמוד תורה כנגד כלם:

—>Chessed "Has no shiur", doesn't matter if it a big act or a small act of chessed and doesn't matter if you do one act or a hundred acts, but we need to be involved in chessed, all the time.

[Bava Metzia 30b:12-13](#) בבא מציעא ל ב:יב-יג

אמר מר (אשר) ילכו זה ביקור חולים היינו גמילות חסדים לא נצרכה אלא לבן גילו דאמר מר בן גילו נוטל אחד מששים בחליו...

[Sanhedrin 98b:4](#)

שאלו תלמידיו את רבי אלעזר מה יעשה אדם וינצל מחבלו של משיח יעסוק בתורה ובגמילות חסדים

[Moed Katan 16b:9](#)

...He (Rabbi chiya) interprets it not as a reference to Torah, but as referring to acts of charity and loving-kindness, which **should certainly be performed in private...**

Orchot Tzaddikim 17

Great is chessed/kindness, for with it the world was built, as it is said: "a world of kindness will be built". Therefore, a **person should cling to the trait of generosity**, which causes all these good things.

[Esther 2:17](#)

ויאהב המלך את־אסתר מכל־הנשים ותשא־הן ותסד לפניהן מכל־הבתולות וישם בת־מלכות בראשה וימליכה תחת ושתי:

Rashi on Megillah 13a: 12

אלא חוט של חסד משוך עליה - מאת הקב"ה לכך נראית יפה לאומות ולאחשוורוש

But a string of chessed was pulled upon her- from God, that's why she looked beautiful to the nations and to Achashverosh.

[Shabbat 63a:28-63b:1](#)

...Anyone who raises an evil dog within his home prevents kindness from entering into his home, since poor people will hesitate to enter his house...

[Shaarei Teshuvah 4:11](#)

...he should prepare his heart to do the commandments that protect [him] from the afflictions, such as the commandment of charity. For it also saves from death, as it is stated (Proverbs 10:2), "but righteousness (tsedekah , which can also mean, charity) saves from death...

[Messilat Yesharim 19:32](#)

But **he who does kindness will receive kindness**, and the more he does, the more he will receive. David would exult in possessing this good trait, striving to do kindness even to those who hated him...

[Midrash Tanchuma, Mishpatim 15:8](#)

They say concerning R. Tanhum the son of Hanilai that whenever he brought home some meat or vegetables or anything else, he would tell the members of his household: **“Set aside a portion for the poor, for I bought one measure of meat for you and a half-measure for the poor.”**

[Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Aseret HaDibrot, Pesachim, Ner Mitzva 179](#)

חסד אל כל היום (תהלים נב, ג), ראוי לאדם שכל ימי חייו יראה שלא יהיה שום יום שלא יעשה בו גמילות חסדים או בגופו או בממונו.

—>We should never go a day without making sure we do chessed. In some form or way.

[Netivot Olam, Netiv Gmilit Chasadim 5:3](#)

כי בנין העולם הוא החסד וא"כ הפך זה הוא חורבן העולם.

[Beitzah 32b:4](#)

...Anyone who has compassion for God's creatures, it is known that he is of the descendants of Abraham, our father, and anyone who does not have compassion for God's creatures, it is known that he is not of the descendants of Abraham, our father.

[Chizkuni Exodus 4:27](#)

Basically, our sages describe Aaron's predominant characteristic, virtue as that of chessed (also peace)

Genesis 47:29 (my parsha)

ויקרבני ימי־ישראֵל למוֹת ויקרא אֵלַי לְבָנָי לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מְצָאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שִׂים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי וְעֲשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת אֶל־נָא תִקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרָיִם:

And when the time approached for Israel to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "Do me this favor, place your hand under my thigh as a pledge of your steadfast loyalty: please do not bury me in Egypt.

Real Chesed Shel Emes-burying the dead or fulfilling wishes of the dead i.e .will - (person cant pay it back)

[Guide for the Perplexed, Part 3 53:2](#)

In our Commentary on the Sayings of the Fathers (chap. 5:7) we have explained the expression *hesed* as denoting an excess [in some moral quality]. It is especially used of extraordinary kindness. **Loving-kindness is practised in two ways: first, we show kindness to those who have no claim whatever upon us; secondly, we are kind to those to whom it is due, in a greater measure than is due to them. In the inspired writings the term *hesed* occurs mostly in the sense of showing kindness to those who have no claim to it whatever. For this reason the term *hesed* is employed to express the good bestowed upon us by God: "I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord" ([Isa. 63:7](#)). On this account, the very act of the creation is an act of God's loving-kindness. "I have said, The Universe is built up in loving-kindness" ([Ps. 89:3](#)); i.e., the building up of the Universe is an act of loving-kindness. Also, in the enumeration of God's attributes, Scripture says: "And abundant in loving-kindness" ([Exod. 34:6](#)).**

aish.com

Rav Yitzchak Zev Soloveitchik: When he was the Rav of Brisk, there were a number of children whose father's identities were unknown and whose mothers were unable to raise them. No one wanted to assume the tremendous responsibility of caring for these children. What did the poor mothers do? They would come in the middle of the night and place their children on the Brisker Rav's doorstep. When morning came and the Rav found a crying child outside his door, he brought him inside. He took upon himself the task of finding someone to take care of the child. If he was unsuccessful, then he himself took care of all the child's needs.(7)

*Whilst he was overflowing in helping others the Brisker Rav was extremely careful never to accept gifts of any kind, even under the most difficult of circumstances"The members of the Brisker Community who have come to Israel want the Rav to continue serving as our Rav. We will pay the Rav a salary just as we did in Brisk. Therefore, I want to either give or lend the Rav the money to pay the tax, which will then be deducted from his salary." "That's an offer I can accept," agreed the Brisker Rav and he accepted the money.(8) The Brisker Rav may or may not have been naturally endowed with the trait of *chesed*. Regardless of his natural inclinations he excelled in the correct form of *chesed* and simultaneously avoided its negative aspects.*

—>Chesed in many forms—Time, money, help, advice, etc. Think of all the organizations out there that help us

[רד"ק על מיכה ו':ח':ג'3:8:6 Micah](#)

ואהבת חסד. הוא גמילות חסדים ויעשה יותר מן הראוי לו:

—>We should go above and beyond what is expected of us in mitzvot and in chessed, life meshurat hadin. If we can give 1/10, lets try to give 119, do more than is asked for us and be really generous.

[Makkos chuf Daled : aleph](#)

אהבת חסד זה גמילות חסדים

[Siddur ashkenaz sim shalom](#)

שים שלום טובה וברכה. חן וחסד ורחמים עלינו ועל כל ישראל עמך. ברכנו אבינו פלגנו פאחד באור פניך. פי באור פניך נתת לנו ה' אלהינו תורת חיים ואהבת חסד

[Tanna dbei eliyahu Rabbah 28:1](#)

ואהבת... חסד והצנע לכת עם אלקיך.... אני מבקש מכם אלא שתהיו אוהבין זה את זה ותהיו מכבדין זה את זה ותהיו יראים זה מזה ולא ימצא בכם עבירה וגזל ודבר מכוער שלא תבואו לידי פסול לעולם לכך נאמר הגיד לך אדם מה טוב ומה ה' דורש ממך כי אם עשות משפט ואהבת... חסד והצנע לכת עם אלקיך אל תקרי והצנע לכת עם אלקיך אלא והצנע לכת עמך אלקיך.

[Pele Yoetz 6:5:ה'6:5 פלא יועץ](#)

ואם אמרו : הוי רץ למצוה קלה כבחמורה שאין אתה יודע מתן שכרן של מצוות, על אחת כמה וכמה מצוה רבה כזו, שנכלל בה **אהבת חסד ואהבת רעים** ודרכי שלום, שראוי לרדף אחריה כרודף אחר החיים.

[Exodus 20:6](#)

ועשה חסד לאלפים לאהבי וישמרי מצותי: (ס)

But I do [acts of] loving kindness [**goodness**] for thousands [of generations] to those who love Me and preserve My commandments.

[Rashi, Exodus 20:6](#)

נוצר חסד. שאדם עושה, לשלם שכר עד לאלפים דור, נמצאת מדה טובה יתירה על מדת פורעניות אחת על חמש מאות, שזו לארבעה דורות, וזו לאלפים (תוספתא סוטה ד, א)

Who stores the loving-kindness — that a person does, in order to reward him, for two thousand generations. Consequently [God's] measure for reward is greater than His measure for punishment by five hundred times, because one is for four generations and the other for two thousand [generations].

[Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer 17:15](#)

Solomon saw that the observance of loving-kindness was great before the Holy One, blessed be He. When he built the Temple he erected two gates, one for the bridegrooms, and the other for the mourners and the excommunicated...

When the Temple was destroyed, the sages instituted (the rule) that the bridegrooms and mourners should go to the synagogues and to the houses of study. The men of the place see the bridegroom and rejoice with him; and they see the mourner and sit with him upon the earth, so that all the Israelites may discharge their duty in the service of loving-kindness. With reference to them he says: Blessed art Thou, who giveth a good reward to those who show loving-kindness.

[Pesachim 113A](#)

The Gemara asks: **What is** the meaning of the word *sudana*, the Aramaic term for a brewer? **Rav Hisda said:** A pleasant secret [*sod na'e*] and acts of loving kindness, as brewing is a good way to make money and also enables one to perform good deeds.

—>Job that makes money and does Chessed is a goal

Wrap-up points:

- 1. Chessed is not something that is just flurry or nice. IT is an inherent mitzvah obligation on all of us to do.*
- 2. Don't have misplaced kindness. Make sure it is rooted in torah and mitt and to the right places and people.*
- 3. There is an inherent different of being Selfish Versus Selfless in attitude*
- 4. Can't just learn about Chessed in theory, have to put it into practice. Torah is meant to be lived and done through action not just learned in the study halls.*
- 5. Not just enough to do chessed but to LOVE to do chessed.*
- 6. Chessed is not just the big things like hashcnassas chosson Kallah...but littler thing counts too, ie sending a meal for family with new baby, phone call to someone sad because,*
- 6b. Chessed "Has no shiur", doesn't matter if it a big act or a small act of chessed and doesn't matter if you do one act or a hundred acts, but we need to be involved in chessed, all the time.*
- 7. Remember chessed begins at home with family.*
- 8. We don't need the honor or the kavod, we should actually flee from kavod, Its better to do Chessed in private anonymously, humbly without fanfare or people knowing about it.*

9. *But, Although chessed begins at home, sometimes we need to help strangers in our midst. Those who may not have a home, a meal, supplies, money, resources. Those may be the ones that really need our help.*
10. *Easy to do Chessed in the honeymoon phases of life...harder to do as years progress, but remember the bridegroom days*
11. *Needs to be ingrained in our personality to be a giving person, a Chessed person...Don't be someone who happens to do chessed. Be someone who lives Chessed*
12. *We should never go a day without making sure we do chessed. In some form or way.*
13. *Loshon tov to counteract loshon hora (quarantine punishment) and ahavat Chinam to counteract sinat Chinam, all with ahavat chessed actions*
14. *Every act of chessed makes more into a chessed person like rambam explains As we've said before, Kids learn from what we do much more than what we say.*
15. *Don't do things to be rewarded or compensated, especially acts of Chessed, do it because it is the right thing to do to help others, do kindness "not on merit to receive reward"*
16. *Chessed in many forms—Time, money, help, advice, etc. Think of all the organizations out there that help us and how we can help too! Help however you can, utilizing whatever talents you have*
17. *We should go above and beyond what is expected of us in mitzvoth and in chessed, lifnei meshurat hadin. If we can give 1/10, lets try to give 1/9, do more than is asked for us and be really generous.*
18. *Do Chessed even for those don't know or like, who may even be our "enemy"*
19. *Lfum tzaarah Agra (Pirkei Avos) the more exertion in an act of chessed, the more reward harder it is more meritorious it is*
20. *Each chessed act is like a shield for us, a protection from harsh degrees and punishments of sins*
21. *Take care of those around you, your own town first.Support local business and charities before going outside the town*

22. We cant just take do Chessed and take care of our own kind, jews, also nonjews, and not just humankind, but animals, the environment, and the world was well

23. Job that makes money and does Chessed is an ultimate level

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