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Chessed Should Be A Tool To Build Relationships

גומל חסדים טובים

What is the meaning *chassadim "tovim"*? Is there such a thing as *chessed* that isn't good?

It is written, "*It is not good for man to be alone.*" Only when a person connects with others can there be any "good".

This is the meaning of *chassadim tovim* - that when Hashem does kindness to us, He does not merely act kind with us, but His kindness to us is always out of a relationship with us.

There are many *gemachim* (*chessed* organizations). Do these people who run any of these *gemachim* feel a connection with those whom they help out? Usually not. There is a lot of *chessed* going on in the world - a lot. But often, it is only "*Gemillas*" *chessed* - it is not yet "*chassadim Tovim*". It is not *chessed* which causes us to build **connections** with others. Many people do wonderful acts of kindness for others, but their hearts are missing. They will "do" acts of kindness for others, but they're not doing it with the motivation to build a connection with others.

Why is it that people can do so much *chessed* all day for others and still not feel a love for others? Isn't there a rule that "the hearts are pulled after the actions"[\[1\]](#) [1]?

The reason for this is because it depends on what a person's motivation is. Only if a person is motivated by a desire to *expand his heart* toward others, will he love others when he does kindness for them.

Superficial "Chessed"

When a person does *chessed* - why is he doing it? Is it because he wants a favor in return - or because he wants to bring a love between him and the other?

There are different kinds of *chessed* that that people do, which are really superficial acts of *chessed*.

One kind of superficial *chessed* is when people act kind because that is what they were trained to do since they were young. *Chessed* was ingrained in them since they were children, yet, they never discovered the real reason why we must engage in *chessed*.

Another kind of superficial *chessed* is when a person does *chessed* because he wants more *zechusim* (merits). He's kind to others, but only because it's good for him to do so.

Real Chessed: Give In Order To Love

But the real kind of *chessed* is based on love for others.

Our body's viewpoint is that love is a reason why we give, and therefore, the purpose of love is to **give**. But our soul has a totally different view: the purpose of giving is to form a **love** between the giver and the recipient.

If a person does *chessed* just for the sake of *chessed* alone – and not because he wants to connect to others – his *chessed* is only superficial. The inner essence of *chessed* is to realize that *chessed* is only a tool – it is a tool to reach our inner love for others.

The Gemara says that “One who gives a gift to his friend must inform him about it.” Rashi explains that this is in order that his friend should feel loved. If a person is kind to others but isn't interested in loving the other, it's like a body without a soul. He has the “body” of *chessed*, but he doesn't have the “soul” of *chessed*.

When a person borrows something from another person, what is he left with after he returns it? If a person asks someone to borrow something because he wants to have a relationship with the person, their connection will remain forever, long after he returns the item.

When a person does *chessed* superficially, at best this is because he wants that “the other should have it good.” But the inner kind of *chessed* is to form a love through acting kind to another. The favors one does for another are to be viewed as a tool to bring about this love.

Life Is About Connecting Creation

Let us make this point even stronger.

If a person lives based on his body's viewpoint, he looks at everything through his body's lens. When it comes to *chessed*, he looks at *chessed* as “actions” and no more. But a person who lives through his soul's viewpoint sees everything through his soul. He sees that “Mitzvos were not created except to connect all people.” The person who sees things through his soul sees that the purpose of interpersonal mitzvos is to have connections with others.

What is the purpose of Creation? A child will say that it is Torah and mitzvos, but this is of course a shallow answer. There is more to it. **The depth of learning Torah and doing all the mitzvos is: to connect all of Creation with Hashem!**

A person who lives only through his body sees *chessed* as kind actions, and “what has to be done.” He looks at everything through his *seichel* (intellect) alone – with no feelings involved.

But a person who lives through his soul sees how everything enables connections. He sees that he has to connect with his friends, his neighbors, his family, and everyone else – and unify them all with Hashem.

Every person in the world loves his family. But is a person using this love as a way to further connection, to unify them all with Hashem? Why is it that a person only loves his family, but not the members of his Kolem...?

People can *daven* a lot, but aren't connected to their davening. People are living with their friends all the time, but they don't really connect to them. Why is it that people often not connected to what they do and experience?

It is because many people don't realize how life is about connecting to the Creation. People will often do *chessed* only because they "have to do *chessed*", but not out of a deep desire to connect with others.

Hashem is a "*Gomel Chassadim Tovim*" – He is good to us because He wants us to connect to Him. He does kindness with us out of a desire to have a connection with us.

A person who doesn't see how life is all about connection sees this life as a constant struggle that bears no results. He will forever try to "concentrate on his *davening*" and try to make his learning "feel more alive and have more *chiyus*\vitality in it", but he will fail and get frustrated, because he is still being superficial.

But when one realizes that life is all about connecting with Creation – because Hashem wants us to connect with Creation, and that is why He gave us the Torah and mitzvos - then of him it will be applied the statement of the Sages, "Words that come from the heart enter the heart." Such a person does *chessed* because he wants to connect with others, and he is connected in all his thoughts to what he does.

Even if someone learns Torah all day, it's possible that he isn't connected to his learning! He is just "reading" the Gemara or "thinking" in learning – but he isn't **connected** yet to the Torah he learns. He needs to realize that he must come to feel an inward connection to the Torah.

A person who realizes how life is all about connecting to the Creation will feel like a person who has redeemed himself from exile! He will also feel that he is able to connect with the pain of the *Shechinah*, which is in pain over the current situation we are in.

The Gemara says that "A person was not created except to have companionship" (which is referring to our need for companionship with Hashem). This is not just a statement of our Sages – it must become a living reality to us!

[1] [2] Sefer HaChinuch, 15.

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/tefillah-022-becoming-connected>

Links

[1] file:///C:/Users/MYRAHELLER/Desktop/NEWNEW/Tefillah%20022.%20Becoming%20Connected.%20V3.docx#_ftn1

[2] file:///C:/Users/MYRAHELLER/Desktop/NEWNEW/Tefillah%20022.%20Becoming%20Connected.%20V3.docx#_ftnref1