

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT RE'EH

30-31 AUGUST | 27 AV

Open Your Heart, Not Just Your Hand



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Youth Director at
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In Parashat Re'eh, the Torah commands us to give to the poor. To many of us, this might seem like an obvious moral obligation: some people have less than I do so I should give to them so that they will be a bit better off. Interestingly, the Torah tells us, *"Rather, you shall open your hand to them [the poor person] and grant them what they need, whatever is lacking."*

What does it mean to give to someone enough to meet their needs? How can we know how much to give?

Rambam (1138-1204) tells us that the *halacha* (law) is that we are obligated to give the poor person what they lack. If they don't have clothes, get them clothes, if they have no furniture, buy furniture. Rashi (1040-1105) says that even if the poor person used to be rich and ride a horse everywhere and had a servant to run ahead of him, if he was accustomed to that and now feels the lack, provide that as well, because the Torah tells us, "whatever is lacking."

You don't need to make the poor person rich. The Torah isn't telling us to turn the poor person into a millionaire. Rather, we have to become sensitive to what people really need, what they are lacking subjectively and uniquely. The art of *chesed* (kindness) is to realise what

a person is really lacking and help them so they no longer suffer from the lack of it.

Chesed is about seeing a person's real, subjective, personal needs, rather than your own personal desire to give. Giving isn't just about opening your hand or opening your wallet, the Torah is telling us it's about opening your heart. There is a foundational concept in Judaism that "the world is built on *chesed*" (Tehillim 89:3). What does this mean? Perhaps one way we can understand it, based on this week's parasha, is that when we make ourselves sensitive to each other's needs, to notice the things the people around us are lacking, we can give to them, strengthening our relationships with each other and making the world a better place.

Parasha Wordsearch

Find the words in the puzzle. Words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

Chesed
Friends
Giving
Important
Improve
Kindness
Lack
Moral
Tzedakah
World

G	M	E	V	O	R	P	M	I	R	J	T
K	I	N	D	N	E	S	S	M	P	G	L
E	G	L	M	S	K	N	H	P	B	L	Z
N	N	C	P	A	D	L	R	O	W	L	C
R	J	Y	E	F	E	S	Y	R	C	A	H
C	H	A	K	A	D	E	Z	T	X	R	K
H	W	T	B	N	B	K	G	A	G	O	H
D	E	S	E	H	C	N	T	N	J	M	F
E	W	I	U	A	I	U	E	T	O	R	H
S	R	P	L	V	U	N	Y	T	Y	X	P
F	Z	P	I	E	D	I	W	Y	M	L	G
Q	G	G	E	D	J	B	T	K	A	I	W

Mazal Tov to Noah Callis of Muswell Hill US on the occasion of his Barmitzvah