

Sweet Charity

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Rebbe Nachman of Breslov taught...

Giving charity involves making judgments, and proper judgment is reached by finding the balance between sternness and kindness. When a person gives charity before praying, it helps him also find the balance in his prayers so that they “hit their target,” right on center.

(Likutei Moharan I:2)

What does this mean to me?

Giving charity is like weighing out scales of justice: one takes from “his own” and distributes it to another. And there are further judgments to make—to whom, how much, when, in what way? With all of this judgment, it can be really hard to remember that the person on the receiving end is as much of a person as I am; that person has feelings, has probably suffered reverses that they didn’t anticipate, and that it isn’t my place to judge them. I need to use my judgment in giving without being judgmental about the other person. How can I manage that? By really feeling for those in need.

A prayer:

*G-d of compassion,
You act with kindness to all of us.
Please be merciful to me
So that I can give plenty to charity.
Grant me the gift of having money
In order to give a lot
To worthy people.
Help me give it with the proper intentions,
And let me really feel for those in need.
([Between me & You](#), p. 48)*

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