

כְּשֶׁמִקְנֵאִין קְנֵאת ה' צְבָקוֹת, נִחָשֵׁב כְּמוֹ צְדָקָה

Zeal for Hashem Is Charity

THE TEACHING

A short teaching: “כְּשֶׁמִקְנֵאִין קְנֵאת ה' צְבָקוֹת, נִחָשֵׁב כְּמוֹ צְדָקָה”, “when one is zealous with zeal for Hashem Tzevakos, it is counted like charity (צְדָקָה).”

The Rebbe brings it from Tosafos (תוספות) in the chapter HaShutfin, on a teaching of Chazal in Bava Basra.

MAIN POINTS

- Chazal read the pasuk “צְדָקָה תְּרוֹמֵם גּוֹי וְחֶסֶד לְאֻמִּים חֲטָאת” (משלי יד:לד), “charity exalts a nation, and the kindness of the peoples is a sin”: “צְדָקָה תְּרוֹמֵם גּוֹי – אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל” (בבא בתרא י:), these are Israel; the kindness of the peoples, these are the nations.
- The Gemara brings a proof from Nevuzaradan, and Tosafos write there: “וְנִבְזָרָאֲדָן עָשָׂה אֶזְרָא צְדָקָה, שְׂקִנְיָא לְהַקְדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא”, “Nevuzaradan did charity then, for he was zealous for the Holy One, blessed be He.”
- It follows: “קְנֵאת ה' צְבָקוֹת הוּא כְּמוֹ צְדָקָה”, zeal for Hashem Tzevakos is like charity.
- Our explanation: charity gives to one who lacks; zeal for Hashem stands up for His honour where it is lacking in the world.

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY · OUR OWN REFLECTION

Caring that Hashem's honour is not trampled is itself a kind of giving. Rebbe Nachman tells us it is counted as charity.

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