



Eternal Connections

BUILDING
OLAM HABA AWARENESS

Mitzvos are opportunities

The Tzaddik of Yerushalayim

Rav Aryeh Levin was known as the “Tzaddik of Yerushalayim.” He was indeed a great *talmid chacham* and a righteous man, but this was at a time when there were many other great people living in Yerushalayim. So what earned him this title? It was his great love and compassion for every Jew, regardless of status or affiliation – young and old, religious or not, widows and orphans, even prisoners. Rav Aryeh’s *ahavas Yisrael* and *mesiras nefesh* for the welfare of every Jew were legendary.

Rav Aryeh was known for visiting the sick, particularly those who had been forgotten, with no family members caring for them. Once, a doctor came to check on a patient who was suffering from a painful illness. He was surprised to find the man in high spirits – but then understanding dawned. “Rav Aryeh certainly visited you today!” the doctor exclaimed.

When Rav Aryeh discovered that there were Jewish patients suffering from leprosy – an extremely contagious disease – he began including them in his visits as well, bringing them homemade food every Erev Shabbos, along with much-needed encouragement. He was not afraid for his own health, stressing that those who are involved with a mitzvah will not be harmed.

More than once, Rav Aryeh managed to cure patients suffering from mental illness when even skilled doctors had failed. When asked to explain his success, Rav Aryeh answered, “I listen to them patiently, but I do not just listen. I empathize with their troubles, and the sick people sense it and respond.”

When Rav Aryeh was advanced in years, the Assistant Minister of Health arranged for a car to take him around Yerushalayim, so that he would not need to exert himself so tremendously to get to the hospitals he visited throughout the city.

Rav Aryeh refused. “Look,” he said, “I am already old, and I can no longer learn Torah properly. The only thing I have left is the mitzvah of visiting the sick. I would rather go on foot, so that at least the *sechar* for walking will be mine.”

Every bit of effort that we put into our mitzvos is ours – forever!

Take This Home

Every step you take on your way to a mitzvah is a mitzvah! As you walk to *shul*, to the *beis medrash*, to take your children to wait for the school bus, to buy food for Shabbos, to assist your parents, to return a lost item, to repay a loan, etc., keep this in mind and savor every step!

In Short

“What will enable our *neshamos*, when the time comes, to be received by HaKadosh Baruch Hu in the best way? One of the ways is if during one’s lifetime he was *menacheim aveilim*, and [by doing so] he comforted the *neshamah* of the departed. *Middah k’neged middah*, measure for measure, when the time comes for his own *neshamah* to depart, he himself will find comfort in *Shamayim*. I am going to quote a very important *lashon* [from the *Sefer HaChayim*]: ‘*V’chol hamenacheim l’aveilim u’marei nefesh*,’ a person who comforts other mourners and people who have bitter hearts, “*b’eis misaso*,” when the time comes for the comforter to leave this world, “*amar HaKadosh Baruch Hu l’malachei hashareis sheheim memunim al hanechamah*,” Hashem says to the *malachim* that are designated to give comfort: “*L’holich nishmaso l’Gan Eden b’chedvah v’gilah*,” to escort the *neshamah* [of the comforter] to Gan Eden with tremendous rejoicing.’ Here you have a ticket to Gan Eden!”

Rabbi Noach Isaac Oelbaum

(To Comfort and Be Comforted, Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah Publications, pg. 92-93.)

It Happened to Me!

My Olam Haba Moment

I was going to make a quick *berachah acharonah* after my lunch, but I stopped myself and realized I could maximize this mitzvah opportunity. I went to get a *bentcher* so that I could better concentrate on the words and express proper appreciation to Hashem for the food I had just eaten. The extra effort I put in now is an investment for life – in Olam Haba.

T.B.

לע"נ רוחמה אביבה בת מורינו ורבינו רב שמואל יעקב

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