

לזכות החיילת בצבאות ה'  
שיינא תחי'  
לרגל יום הולדתה ג' טבת

נדפס ע"י הוריה  
הרה"ת ר' חיים אפרים וזוגתו מרת ח'  
מושקא ומשפחתם שיחיו  
גאלדשטיין

# PRACTICAL HORA'OS

A CLOSER  
LOOK AT  
SOME OF  
THE REBBE'S  
HORA'OS

## IN LIEU OF A GIFT, PLEASE DONATE...

THE REBBE'S APPROACH TO THE  
CONCEPT OF GIVING TZEDAKAH IN  
LIEU OF AN EXPECTED GIFT

*A birthday, anniversary, or other milestone celebration wouldn't be the same without gifts, and for Chassidim, when it came to the Rebbe's milestones, they wished to give the Rebbe meaningful gifts. The Rebbe explained, time and again, that the most meaningful gift — both for the Rebbe's milestones and for anyone else's — is to increase in tzedakah and in other ruchniyusdike pursuits.*

## GIFTS FOR THE REBBE

As the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's 40th wedding anniversary approached in 5729\*, thousands of Chassidim sent their well wishes, as well as pledges to increase in Torah — including the study of Iggeres Hateshuvah which had just been released in its own booklet<sup>1</sup> — and tzedakah to mark the occasion. In a *sicha* on Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach 5729\*, the Rebbe addressed these well wishes and gifts.

*The vessel and the pathway to draw down brachos and hash-pa'os is through learning Torah and doing mitzvos. Many of those who sent brachos for the anniversary connected their brachos with an addition in their study of Torah — in particular, in the study of Iggeres Hateshuvah — and in giving tzedakah, which is the most fundamental of all the mitzvos.*

*Although generally speaking, there are those whose focus is Torah-study and those whose focus is business, however since when it comes to kedushah each aspect comprises the other aspects as well, in this case those who until now have only contributed by increasing in Torah-study should also add in tzedakah, and those who have added in tzedakah should also add in Torah-study.*

## GIFTS FOR ANYONE

Several days after the above *sicha*, the Rebbe once again addressed the topic of giving gifts. This time, the Rebbe went into detail, explaining what people get wrong when they give presents, and how to elevate gift-giving to a *ruchniyusdike* pursuit.

*There is a laudable custom that when one wishes to bless a fellow Jew, it is connected with giving a donation to tzedakah in their name. For example, in the Mi Shebeirach, we say that the person should be blessed “because I will — without a vow — give tzedakah in his merit” — because the money you’re donating belongs to you, and you can transfer the zechus of the donation to someone else.*

*Another thing we do is to study Torah in the person’s merit, as Shulchan Aruch rules in Hilchos Talmud Torah, “A person may make a deal with his fellow that he will study Torah, his fellow will provide his livelihood, and they will split the reward.”*

*Therefore, it is fitting that from now on, this minhag be established.*

*The way of the world is that when you want to wish someone well, you send them a gift. And though this has become an established custom among Yidden as well, best would be to connect the well-wishing with tzedakah and Torah. Therefore, it is proper that whenever people gather to bless someone — a chosson and kallah, a bar mitzvah and the like — it should be connected with giving tzedakah and learning Torah in the merit of those who are being blessed. And if they really want to give gifts anyways — not that there’s a reason to — they should be*

*sure not to go into debt over it.*

*This is one of the unique challenges in the United States: the need to one-up your neighbor. When the neighbor gives a gift, you — who perceive yourself to be twice as great as the neighbor — feel a need to give a gift worth twice as much! But you don’t have the money, so you take a loan, even with collateral, as long as you can outdo the neighbor.*

*If Hashem doesn’t make unreasonable demands of His creations, certainly the bar mitzvah or the chosson don’t need to ask for more than the givers can afford...*

*All this applies when it’s not connected to tzedakah. When it is connected to tzedakah, however, the Gemara in Maseches Taanis says, “Tithe so that you will become wealthy.” ...*

*Therefore, it’s important to publicize that when you wish another Yid well, especially those close to your heart, you should connect it with giving tzedakah and learning Torah on their behalf.*

*In yechidus klolis for chassanim and kallos and bar mitzvahs the Rebbe would always mention this *minhag*: That the bar mitzvah — or the chassan and kallah — and all of their relatives and acquaintances should give tzedakah in their merit. **T***

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1. See “Marked Through Matanos” — Derher Kislev 5774.