



Adapted from the sefer **חמין במוצאי שבת** and **חזונו דזעיר אנפין** collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Re'eh 5777

In this week's *parsha*, the Torah lists the non-kosher birds. One of those birds is the *chasida*. In *Maseches Chulin* (ג"ו), we find:

“Rav Yehuda said, ‘The *chasida* is the white *daya*. Why is she called *chasida*? Because she does *chedsed* with her friends.’”

I had the *zechus* of hearing the *Pnei Menachem zy”a* clarify this *drasha*. He began with a question posed by his great-great grandfather the *Chidushei Ha’Rim zy”a*.

“If the *chasida* performs acts of *chedsed* with her friends, wouldn’t it make sense for the *chasida* to be an **עוף טהור** - a kosher bird, instead of an **עוף טמא** - a non-kosher bird?”

The *Chidushei Ha’Rim* answered that if we examine Rav Yehuda’s words carefully, we find that even though the *chasida* earned her name by performing acts of *chedsed*, she treated only her friends (fellow *chasidot*), with kindness. Other, foreign birds, were never the recipients of her *chedsed*. This is why the *chasida* is a *tamei* non-kosher bird.

One who has the true attribute of *chedsed*, performs acts of loving-kindness for the benefit of all creatures. It is true that there are laws of precedence in *chedsed*, as Chazal teach us, *hakarov karov kodem* - those closest to you take precedence. Nonetheless, the basic *halacha* is that if one is able to, he should perform acts of *chedsed* with everyone, not only with his relatives and friends.



[1]

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After presenting this *peirush* of the *Chidushei Ha'Rim zy"u*, the *Pnei Menachem* asked the following question.

“The Torah commands us **וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כָּמוֹךָ** - You should love your friend as you love yourself (**וְיָקָרָא י"ט:י"ח**). The implication is that a Jew's obligation to love others is limited to **רֵעֶךָ** - his friends, as opposed to other Jews. Isn't this the same negative exclusivity that caused the *chasida* to be classified as a non-kosher bird?”

The Rebbe answered;

“*Chazal* teach us that the Torah was not given to **מלאכי השרת** - angels. Therefore, when it comes to **וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כָּמוֹךָ**, the Torah can only demand that we love **רֵעֶךָ**, a friend, as wholeheartedly as we love ourselves. The Torah understands that developing such love for a total stranger is beyond most people's ability. However, when it comes to *chesed* - acts of loving-kindness, the Torah commands us to bestow *chesed* upon all of Hashem's creations.”

If we take the time to think about it, the lesson of the *chasida* is very daunting. On one hand, her acts of *chesed* were so abundant that instead of her original name, *daya levana*, she earned the title *chasida*. On the other hand, she is an **עוף טמא** - a non-kosher bird, because her *chesed* was limited to her own circle of friends. Not only is she classified as *tamei*, but her *tumah* spreads to others. Therefore, if the flesh of a *chasida* fell into a kosher soup, the soup would become *treif*.

Chessed that from its inception, is limited to an exclusive group of recipients, may be called *chesed*, but it isn't true *chesed*.

We have mentioned that one of the acronyms ascribed to **אלול** is **אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ וּמִתְּנוֹת לְאֲבִינָיִם** (אסתר ט:כ"ב) - A man to his friend, and gifts to the needy. Based on the lesson of the *Pnei Menachem zy"u* we can explain the *pasuk* as follows.



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ואז נזכה שגם השי"ת יגמול עמנו חסד ברחמים מרובים, ויכתבנו בספרן של צדיקים לחיים טובים ארוכים ולשלום, אכי"ר

איש לרעהו - a man is commanded to love his friend as he loves himself.

ומתנות לאביונים - However, gifts of *chesed* must be given to all who need, and not just to your friends.

May Hashem Yisborach help each of us become a source of *chesed* for all, no matter who they are, and no matter where they come from.

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